

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TELEVISION WATCHING AND LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT IN FIRST SECONDARY STUDENTS IN JORDANIAN SCHOOLS

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This study explores the relationship between TV watching practice, types of TV programs watched, TV watching length, parental educational level, and gender with the language achievement. To that end, a questionnaire measuring language achievement levels among 1st secondary students attending schools within 1st and 2nd Directorates of Education was developed. The sample (N=500) was selected with the stratum random method.

Results revealed:

- High level of the language achievement among 1st secondary grade students.
- Statistically significant differences in the language achievements attributed to gender, in favor of female students.
- Statistically significant differences in the language achievements attributed to TV watching length. The study found that the language achievement was better for moderate and lengthy viewers than for short viewers.
- Statistically significant differences in the language achievement attributed to parental educational level; in favor of children with parents having college degree.
- Statistically significant differences in the language achievement attributed to type of programs viewed. Results from the post comparisons showed that the language achievement was better for cultural viewers, TV news, and child-oriented program viewers.

Keywords: TV watching, Language Achievement

Introduction:

Media, in general, and television, in particular, has greatly influenced thinking, language, and behavior patterns of people of the age. This influence can be tracked at the global communities' level, where the

international communities have become a very small village, wherein people from distant places communicate simultaneously, which contributed to the convergence of their behavior patterns, language and consumer habits. In Jordan

specific social, cultural, and language changes are currently taking place which were not recognized before, as a result of the huge media stuff transmitted through the television.

Modern media, especially the television, plays a paramount role in human life, and television, in particular exceeded its basic task as information transmitter, and communication device to the extent of getting involved in the political, social, and educational arenas. The television also contributes to the making of the public opinion, mindset, and providing people language vocabularies.

It is argued by some theorists that the television embarked a revolutionary change in human mood, and people habits, and culture (Wafsa, 1993, P173, 182). American authors typically designate the television as "child's spiritual father" (Ibrahim, 1987, P29), and similarly referred to children of the age as the "TV generation", meaning that children are raised by an educational triad involving father, mother and the television set (Dakak, 1989, P117). Some authors argue that the spontaneous learning tends to last and continue longer than the intended learning. Antwan Rahma, on the other hand, argues that incidental learning mostly would be more influential among young adults, and indirectly enhances in them thoughts, attitudes, interests, and habits effectively even more than the systematic learning (Rahma, 1988, P240).

Empirical studies often report results indicate that television is placed among top interests of children and adolescents. This, of course, implies the paramount educational importance of the television in

forming perceptions, thinking, language, and referential values of children (Awtfa, 1993, P186). In his article on Media and Children Education, al-Qala argued that audio-video display of content increases retention level up to 50%; children interact with the television programs by imitating voices and acts vigorously and interactively, and that children spend time on TV watching longer than studying at school (al-Qala, 1987, P110, 111).

Learning by modeling theorists (for instance, Bandura, and Waltron) demonstrated that television models are as effective as the automated models that stimulate a number of responses, thereby television can be viewed a significant source of viewer's behavior (Bandura, 1963, PP3-11). Similarly, Goodwin & Klausmeier found that TV models imitated by children and adolescents serve as symbolic models perceivably affecting their lives, and this effect parallels the effect of human models in their lives (Goodwin & Klausmeier, 1975, PP481-476). Psychologists, educators, and sociologists were much concerned about pros and cons of watching television and conducted their studies to identify advantages and disadvantages of this novel phenomenon will all dimensions and variables involved. Many research studies have been conducted to explain such phenomenon which took as its major focus children and young adults as subjects in order to identify effects, advantages and disadvantages for TV viewers. However, major part of television studies where focused on disadvantages for viewers. It is frequently reported disadvantage that for young adult viewers, TV watching impairs their

optical nerves, increases distraction, and weakens apprehension (Douri, 1977, P5, 6).

Further, fast and intensive showing of TV views might lessen best assimilation of the message conveyed through television. In addition, habitual viewing of television would develop passivity and apathy among viewers so that they would be less conscious to occurrences around them. Habitual television viewers would be characterized by laziness, dissociated from their social relations, less tendency to communicate with others, less exposed to novel language skills (Ma'touq, 1996, P99).

Other authors argue that despite earlier negatives, television would greatly benefit development of the language skills among young adults. Others support that television possesses a tremendous educational power. In their view, learning literacy by children, verbal expression, and even solving mathematical exercises would be facilitated by the television. Others question whether television helps language acquisition? And develops language repertoire in children? Regarding such questions, educators and parents held conflicted views and separated into two groups; the first argues that our children have ineffective verbal expression skills, lack meaningful vocabularies, the development of their expressiveness takes less favorable direction, asserting that the language used on the television is ineffective, with limited vocabularies, and involving jargon and peculiar words. The other group argues against the earlier view asserting that it is not realistic since the language used on television is colloquial that despite

criticisms (grammatical errors, incoherence, ineffective expressions, slang words, and coined language structures) remains responsive to developments (Merea Schalvon et al., 1996, P5, 119, and 120).

Therefore, the problem investigated in this study is represented by answering this major question: Is there any relationship between television watching and language achievement among First Secondary grade students in the Jordanian schools within First and Second Directorates of Education in Capital Amman.

*Statement of the Problem
and Study Questions:*

This study questions whether there is a relationship between TV watching practice and language achievement among 1st secondary grade students in Jordanian schools within Amman 1st and 2nd Directorates of Education? The following sub-questions derive from this main question:

1. What is the language achievement level of 1st secondary grade students?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to gender?
3. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to TV watching length?
4. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to TV programs watched?
5. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to parental edu-

ational level?

Significance of the Study:

The significance of the present study resides the following:

1. This study attempts to inquire the effect of the viewing television on language acquisition by First Secondary grade students.
2. Results obtainable from the present study would be helpful for media workers in producing more accurate and meaningful language structures that are free from errors, misspellings, and colloquial words.
3. Results from this study would provide both parents and educators recommendations on how to guide children and students towards programs that help them acquire accurate language and to decline ones that provide low-level ineffective language.
4. This study will be valuable considering the dearth of similar studies on the Arab World level, and could be a springboard for further studies with samples representing various age groups.

Objective of the Study:

The purpose of the present study is to identify the relationship between TV watching practice and language achievement, and to explore the effect of such variables as gender, TV watching length, types of programs viewed, and parental educational level on that relationship.

Limitations:

This study is confined to 1st secondary students attending the academic track in

Jordan schools within Amman 1st and 2nd Directorates of Education in the capital city of Amman during the academic year 2008/2009. In addition, this study is limited specifically to the television among the other visual media means and concerned with its relationship with language.

Operational Definitions:

Language Achievement: Refer to the acquired words, structure, and sentences by examinees as a result of watching TV.

TV Watching Length: Means the time period spent by an examinee in watching TV.

TV Program Type: Describes TV programs viewed by an examinee.

Literature Review:

Media represents the pivotal of the information community, with great authority alluring imitation, and creates novel methods that commensurate with the technological advancement. A decade ago, television transmission was merely a national affair, but with the expanded use of satellite technology the television transmission has become comprehensive, developed and global (Kazim, 2002, P76). In consequence of development in communications, television's role has become significant in life of both individuals and communities, and more recently television has become the critical player in political, economic, social and educational fields and assumed varied roles and functions not only in the intellectual, social and leisure arenas, but also in forming minds, language and public opinion (Wafra, 1993, PP173-174).

teaching. Previously, children who received their knowledge from seniors in home and school, are now provided knowledge through television which rivals older knowledge authorities besides its basic function of amusement, and soon rivaled the family itself which considering its more traditional methods can do very little in getting abreast with the huge possibilities available to television (al-Asfour et al, 1994, PP75-78). Since first appeared in homes, the television contributed to a diminished role of family; "the same as the old witch" eloquently described by Uri Bronfenbrenner, "the television would put its magic spells on every act or word, turning the bewitched living persons into silent figures". The risk involved in watching television to a great extent resides not only in behaviors it elicits, but also in the learning situation offered by the family gaming and arguments through which children learn and develop their personalities. Television, therefore, would isolate children from their family context (Wein, 1999, P159). Television also captured the function of child-raise and education traditionally assumed by the family, which itself not only has been a rival but also victim of the television (al-Bahili, 1990, P95). The fascination of the television allured both youngsters and adults with the animated image on the emotional and cognitive levels (Wafsa, 1993, P190).

Television-School Relationship:

The rival between school and television has been inaugurated since the mass media become the global policy around the world

that targets audience of variety ages even children. Historically, school was the mechanism shifting children from home to larger community. Today, children receive their knowledge and guidance from the television, and spend with this device time longer than at school. This situation provoked educators who view television as critical in deterioration of education by introducing deformed cognitive alternatives (Karam, 1988, PP93-94). In this context, Balqiz, on the other hand, supports the argument that the educational functions of both official and unofficial institutions have declined and their more traditional role of producing social values has been minimized as a result of emergence rivaling institutions during the 21st century as represented by television and visual media (Balqiz, 2002, P93).

TV's Role in the Augmented Language Repertoire:

In past days, humans have been communicating within the limited environment where they live, or in private or public places they typically visit. This situation has dramatically changed, as anyone can communicate with anyone irrespective of distance or language. Such inventions as radio, television and cinema are effective communication means with which humans are communicate and exchange experiences and knowledge and convey civilization across groups and communities irrespective of race, distance or language. Through television monitor one would be affected by the television image due to interactivity it provides. So, the

affected by the language and social behavior viewed on the television are mostly come from low socioeconomic level families.

7. Family's position regarding TV viewing by their children:

Family is another significant factor intervening child-television relationship regarding language and social behavior. Parents usually affect attitudes held by their children and sometimes select for them what to watch. Family, basically parents is a critical intervening factor in the child-television relationship (Kamal et al., 1994, P22, 28).

Influential Power of Television:

Television has become viewed as one of the most significant social change agents as it is the key communication channel of exchanging data, information, ideas and language content. The television image is presently the magical key of the new cultural system that produces man's conscious of the world. The image has overcome language barriers and the transmitted image is received in geographically very far places. With the satellite transmission, the cultural messages widely received in almost all countries, and the audio-video TV images have become signaling the media empires generating millions of images a day that are received by million viewers worldwide.

Image dissemination is the cultural stuff of the day, and a new formulation of the world's consciousness and how is expressed. The image culture is the one that defeated more traditional culture of

word in favor of restructuring receiver's conscious based on the cultural discourse as conveyed by the image culture. The image culture is highly attractive and alluring to the extent that defying resistance by average human receivers. It is indeed a culture of no less smartness to adapt consciousness and emotions of its consumers. The image-based cultural stuff is the input fed into the Arab conscious and consumed in gluttony so that to make its imagination and conscious to world and objects (Balqiz, 2002, PP59-81).

Typically, feelings and inner sentiments are targeted by images, so that the unconscious motives are affected. The unparalleled influence of images restructures the unconscious memory of a child. The herald of the current media revolution as represented by the television and satellite communications promises environments with unprecedented social and cultural dimensions (Dlaimi, 2002, P9-11). A report recently published in Britain on the effect of television images revealed that television is a long term significant factor forming one's moral and mental attitudes and values and increases vocabulary repertoire of individuals (Abdulhameed, 2005, P378). The powerful influence of the television is best summarized by a statement by de Gaulle "give me this little monitor and I'll change the French people" (Snow, 2001, P10).

Television-Family Relationship:

Within few decades, television has made a shift from being merely a device for promotion and advertising to become a means of socialization and language

The television captures wide interest in present days considering its powerful influence upon individual, communities, and groups, as the television messages encompasses us everywhere, so it is necessary for researchers in different fields to investigate the influence of the television on viewers. Abu Esbaa (1995) reported that TV influence studies aiming at validating such influence on variety levels largely increased since the late of the last century and earlier of this century.

Considering the increased influence of television, many researchers investigated the television as an influential factor in behavior, language, attitudes or groups and communities. Results produced were sometimes varied depending on which variables studied as well as social backgrounds of populations studied. There are numerous factors upon which television influence would rely, including:

1. Age:

Behavior of children is influenced by what they view on television and this influence affected by their age. Younger children model both negative and positive behavior more than older children as they are less conscious to sequence of events and behavior consequences compared with their elder counterparts, and even they would view some scenes that are less favorable to their age level.

2. Gender:

Children, boys and girls would respond differently to what they view on television. No doubt that television programs affect language and social behavior of both boys

and girls, though some argue that the influence of television is stronger on boys than on girls, particularly in the field of negative social behavior (violence and crime), and stronger on girls in the field of positive social behavior because of differing socialization process for boys and girls in a community.

3. Apprehension level:

The child-television relationship regarding language and social behavior, especially negative behaviors is affected by what is viewed, and his ability to distinguish what is factual or prospected, fictional or real views.

4. Excitement Level:

The way by which the stuff is presented on the television is more influential on child's social behavior than the stuff itself. The exciting style of display and the accompanying animation and sound effects of television views captures viewer's interest for longer times.

5. Viewing length:

The time amount spent by a child in viewing television programs and how often would have great effect on children. In fact, children who view television most often are vulnerable to such programs than less viewing students.

6. Family's socioeconomic level:

The socioeconomic status is a very important interactive factor intervening the child-television relationship in the field of language and social behavior. It is typically reported that children who negatively

social interaction takes place in one form or another by such communication facilities through which viewers acquire knowledge, words, and other language skills.

The television transmission is received everywhere and by everybody no matter how far are they and irrespective of their age or education level and needless to say that television is indispensable because it is the key mass communication channel available for our contemporary communities. However television is significant and influential in language acquisition it involves risks too. In this context Mustafa Mandour argues "Since the invention of the television and similar devices, linguists realized the renewal leadership of the spoken word. Results from many empirical studies conducted in a number of the Arab countries revealed the television as the primary media source for information and knowledge as well as for amusement and leisure. The wider use of television makes it the most influential language enhancing tool. Currently, many satellite channels have been established, and television transmission is received globally with all world languages. This possibility allows viewers greater variety and excitement and thus longer watching periods, which of course opens the door widely for language communication and influence that can be employed for language education not locally but regionally too.

The television display combines images, sounds, animation and music to deliver the message which is captured by viewer's ears and eyes. The vision doubles knowledge acquisition and learning lan-

guage structures and skills will be easier as the eye can collect too voluminous facts that brain sometimes would be unable to manage at once. The importance and effectiveness of television in enhancing language achievement appears also in television features of portability, easy and fun to use which is attractive for people of various ages, classes, mental and educational levels (Ma'touq, 1996, PP92-93).

Prior Studies

Arabic Studies:

Mansour (1990) conducted a study for purpose of evaluating the effect of viewing "Open Semsame" program series on the language ability and general facts among preschool children. The sample (N=100) consisted of preschool children attending kindergartens in Zarka city, Jordan. Using the experimental design. The study found statistically significant differences among mean estimates of the experimental and control groups on the Language Ability and General Fact tests in favor of the experimental group students who were exposed to the educational program.

Al-Utaibi (1990) investigated the effect of viewing "ALMANAHEL", the education program on Arabic language achievement by the first four elementary grade students. The sample involved (699) participants from Abuy Nsair Development schools. The purpose of the study was to explore the effect of viewing the TV educational program "ALMANAHEL" on language achievement by the first four grade students and their attitudes towards

the program. Using the experimental design, the study revealed statistically significant differences in participant's Arabic achievements attributed to means by which the instructional content is delivered in favor of the experimental participants; and statistically significant differences among participants attributed to the educational level in favor of 4th grade students.

Barakat (1991) aimed at identifying the role of media (TV and radio) on the socialization process among students in the primary school level in Egypt. The randomly selected sample (N=180) consisted of students aging (10-15) yrs. The study used the analytical descriptive survey methodology. Results indicated that participants predominantly were TV viewers whether "always" or "most often". Results also supported that TV viewing did not affect by gender, but rather by viewer's economic level. However, females were more than males in control of their viewing times. Results also emphasized that children not only view TV programs targeting kids by also those mainly directed to adults.

Zuhur Badran (1993) conducted a study intending to identify the effect of TV viewing habits and viewing length on achievement of 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students from different socioeconomic backgrounds in Jordan. Participants were (10710) students attending Ministry of education and UNRWA schools in Mafraq, Irbid, and Capital Amman. The researchers used the questionnaire to identify TV viewing habits and TV viewing length scale to measure viewing hours per week. The study found statistically significant differ-

ences in achievement of students in the combined three grades in Jordan attributed to viewing length in favor of the group viewing TV for short times, and that TV viewing increases student inactivity. Kamal et al (1994) surveyed attitudes of a sample of children, young people and parents on TV viewing, effects on children and youth, and relationship between TV viewing and such variable as age, gender, parent educational, social and economic levels. The population consisted of three groups: children (N=600), young (N=600), and parents (300), (20) of them had children and young adults. The questionnaire was the instrument used to collect data from the stratum randomly selected sample. The study revealed that (98.5%) of common people view TV; (98.2%) of young people view TV; (66.9%) of young people do not affect by what they view on the TV, whereas they are affected by TV stars through their TV films, shows, and programs. However, (67%) of parents responded that had an effect on their children. Child (52.2%) compared with young (76%) respondents indicated that they would do nothing while viewing TV. Regarding the educational effect of TV, results found that they learn general fact and religious knowledge. Young and parents samples were in agreement regarding that result.

Hamdan (1995) conducted a study on youth, TV, and problems related to knowledge and pedagogy in Lebanon. The study aimed at identifying how college participant's minds of (20-30) years old are formed by the stuff presented on the TV as a source of their knowledge. The study attempted to explore the TV as knowledge

resource, and how it is effective and influential from the social, cultural and psychological aspects. The conclusion was that the TV in Lebanon was not a unifying factor of scientific and cultural interests of young people and that the Lebanon viewer is in the first place passive receiver.

Abu Zaraifeh (2001) sought to identify the effect of foreign cartoon films on behavior and value system of children in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The sample (N=1164) consisted of both children (7-13 yrs old), parents with children, and Elementary and Middle School teachers. Data were collected using the questionnaire and results were concluded using the content analysis. Results supported the expectation that the cartoon films moderately affect language achievement of children, their expression ability, and facts retained.

Hawatmeh (2004) studied the influential role of media on the political socialization and interaction between individual and media. The study followed the historical descriptive, analytical methodology using a questionnaire. Results indicated that media were ranked first among the socialization resources (44.6%), next was the family (25.6%), and followed by school (17%) and finally political parties. The study supported the result that the television takes the first rank among other influential media means.

International Studies:

Atkins (1973) identified the relationship between political knowledge and viewing TV news. A comparison was held

between levels of political knowledge and viewing TV news. The study involved (703) American children aging (9-10) yrs. Results found that the more TV news viewed, the greater political knowledge will be held by children; and as they getting older their political knowledge will be more. Children who view political news not often obtained higher grades on the political knowledge scale, and that viewing TV news highly affected political background knowledge in children.

Reinking & Wu (1990) found that the effect typically reported of TV on literacy associates with child age, and TV viewing length.

Potter (1990), on the other hand, sought to identify how influential is viewing TV programs and the perception of values by adolescents. The sample consisted of school students aging (11-18) years. The response to values was tested in association with being exposed television. The study found that the influence differs by program to which adolescent is being exposed.

Comstock (1991) was conducted with children aging (3 and 5) years, which is a very critical phase for brain development, basically language and other cognitive skills. Viewing television would affect the neurons development in children's brain and thus achieving success in literacy earlier of the age if provided with experience, books and other printed material.

Mireat Schalvon & Pierre Chorcoat, and Michele Soshoun (1996) "entitled child & TV", aimed at identifying the effect of television on language and facts in the French community. The researchers used the

descriptive, critical analytical methodology and found that the television has effect on language, academic achievement and family relations.

On the other hand, Macbeth (1996) demonstrated that children who view the animated cartoon or other amusing TV programs, as preschoolers will experience deteriorated literacy skills.

Write et. Al. (2001) supported the result that watch TV educational programs by five year olds such as "Open Sesame" enhanced their language repertoire, improved their literacy skills more than children who were "seldom", or "not at all" viewers.

Gentile & Walsh (2002) found that the American children of (12-17) year olds view TV (25hrs/week), about three hours and a half a day in average.

Summary of Prior Studies:

The TV literature of Arabic and international studies reviewed addressed the TV's role in the academic achievement, and effects on the social values, whereas others dealt with the relationship with the expression ability. Some prior studies emphasized on the relationship between TV watching and achievement (Oaidat & Badran, 1993; Utaibi, 1990); studied the effect of TV programs on developing language repertoire and general facts (Mansour, 1990; Comstock, 1991; Schalvon et. Al., 1996; Write et. Al., 2001), effects on child behaviors and values (Abu Zaraifeh, 2001; Potter, 1990); influential role of media on political socialization (Hawatmeh, 2004); effects of TV news watching on children (Janter & Schavi, 1978), the TV's role in socialization

(Barakat, 1991), or the relationship between political knowledge and TV watching (Atkin, 1973).

The result of the literature review regarding the influential role of television reveals that the major part of studies reviewed was focused on the effect of TV on achievement, socialization or behavior and values, and involved participants representing lower grades or preschool stage. The present study differs from the earlier studies in that it will involve participants from the 1st secondary school level who are much closer to adulthood than lower grade students in the earlier studies. This study also directly addresses the language achievement, and to the knowledge of this researcher, there is no such study to study the effect of television on the language achievement.

Methods & Procedures:

This empirical part of the study demonstrates methodology, population, sample, variables and instruments used to reach results, and validity and reliability tests, and statistical treatment.

Methodology:

The methodology employed in this study is descriptive analytical for appropriateness to achieve its objectives.

Population:

The population consisted of 1st secondary grade students in public schools within Amman 1st and 2nd Directorates of Education during the academic year 2008/2009.

Table (1)
Participants distribution by gender and school

School Building	M	F	Total
Dirar bin al-Azwar School	106		106
Princes Alia Girls School		60	60
Hussein College School	110		110
Sukaina Girls School		54	54
Imam Ali School	108		108
Princes Basma School		62	62
Total	324	176	500

Sample:

Sample (N=500) was randomly selected by the stratum method from 1st secondary student body attending public schools in Amman 1st and 2nd Directorates of Education. Namely, the sample was selected from: Dirar bin al-Azwar Secondary, Princes Alia Girl, Hussein College, Sukaina Girl, Imam Ali, and Princes Basma Schools as shown in table (1).

Instrumentation:

The authors in this study developed 5-point likert-type 30-item Student Language Achievement scale. The questionnaire was developed by reviewing relevant literature and capitalizing on similar scales, question items were phrased or rephrased. Direct interviews were held with 1st secondary students attending Dirar bin al-Azwar school within Amman 1st Directorate of Education. Drawing on notes taken during the interviews, the thirty questionnaire items were phrased.

Validity:

To ascertain validity of the study instrument (questionnaire), the preliminary

version of the scale was shown to a number of judges selected from the faculty members of educational colleges in the Jordanian universities. Each judge was asked to make his judgment and submit notes regarding questionnaire items in terms of suitability to study subject, intelligibility, and language accuracy, and any other notes. Some items were rephrased in accordance with judgment submitted, and two items were deleted. The final version of the questionnaire, thus, consisted of 28-items.

Reliability:

To test for reliability, the questionnaire was administered to students (N=52) selected from the population but outside of the main sample. The questionnaire was re-administered two weeks later to the same sample and under similar conditions. The study revealed reliability coefficient (0.84) acceptable for purpose of the present study. The authors also applied Chronbach alpha formula to compute the internal consistency (0.95).

Table (2)
Results from t-test comparing mean scores of participants on the Language Achievement Scale with
the neutral score

Number	M	SD	Neutral Grade	T-Value	α
500	101.83	8.18	84	48.7	0.00

Variables

First: Independent Variables:

TV watching length: having three levels: short watch, moderate watch, and lengthy watch.

Gender: having two levels males and females

TV Program Type: having six levels: cultural, sports, news, artistic, foreign, and children programs

Parental educational level: a composite variable including educational levels of the father and mother and having four levels: illiterate, primary, secondary and university

Second: Dependent Variable:

Language achievement: refer to the aggregate score obtained by participants on the language achievement scale.

Adjustment and Statistical Treatment:

The instrument used in this study was 5-point likert-type scale including five response alternatives [strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree strongly disagree]. The positive response (Strongly Agree) was assigned (5 points), and the other alternatives were assigned [4=agree, 3=unsure, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree]. Scores obtained by the participants were ranging from (28-140), and score (84) was con-

sidered as the cut-off score between moderate and high language achievement levels. This score was the product of multiplying number of items (28) on the scale by the mean scale grades (3). The researcher opted the following groups to represent the language achievement level: [28-56]=weak; [57-84]=moderate; [85-112]=high; [113-140]=very high. To answer study question, the following statistical treatments of means, standard deviations, t-test, one-way analysis of variance, and Scheffe post-hoc comparisons were performed.

Results

Results related to question one: *What is the language achievement level among 1st secondary grade students?*

To answer this question, means and standard deviation were computed for scores obtained by participants in the language achievement scale. Using T-test, the mean score (M=101.83) was compared with the neutral score (84). Table (2) shows the comparison results.

Table (2) shows that the means difference between subject's scores on the Language Achievement test and the neutral score (general average) was statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$). As the mean scores obtained by participants on the Language Achievement test was above the neutral

Table (3)

Results from t-test of differences among mean language achievement scores by gender

Gender	N	M	SD	T-Value	Freedom Degrees	α
M	324	100.7	9.44	4.29	498	0.00
F	176	103.9	4.4			

Table (4)

Means and standard deviations of language achievement level by TV watching length

Watching Length	N	M	SD
Short	29	83.96	6.46
Moderate	100	102.18	9.23
Lengthy	371	103.13	6.12
Total	500	101.83	8.18

score (84), then the language achievement level of the 1st secondary students was high.

Results related to question two: Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) level among language achievements attributed to gender?

To answer question two, means and standard deviations of participant's scores (males and females) on the language achievement test, and t-test was used to find out mean differences as shown in table (3).

Table (3) shows a statistically significant difference in the language achievement level attributed to gender in favor of females ($T\text{-value}=4.29$), which was statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$), meaning that the language achievement was better for female than for male students.

Results related to question three: Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) level in the language achievement attributed to watching length?

To answer this question, means, and standard deviations of the language achievement were computed for the watching length variable as shown in table (4).

Table (4) shows that the mean language achievement score ($M=83.96$) obtained by short viewers was lower than moderate viewers ($M=102.18$), and lengthy viewers ($M=103.13$). To identify mean differences, one-way analysis of variance was conducted and table (5) shows related results.

Table (5) shows a statistical significant difference at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the language achievement levels attributed to TV viewing length ($F=104.65$). To reveal mean difference resources, Scheffe post hoc comparisons test was used and table (6) shows related results.

Table (7)

Means and standard deviations of language achievement levels by parental educational level

Parental Educational Level	N	M	SD
Illiterate			
Primary			
Secondary			
University			
Total			

Table (8)

Variance analysis results of means language achievement by parental educational level

Variance Source	Total Squares	Freedom Degrees	Mean Squares	F-Value	α
Inter-group					
Intra-group					
Overall					

Table (9)

Results from Scheffe post hoc comparisons test of mean language achievements by parental educational level

Educational Level	Illiterate (100.24)	Primary (100.91)	Secondary (102.98)	University (106.88)
Illiterate				
Primary				
Secondary				
University				

* Statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$) level

Table (7) shows mean language achievements in ascending order (100.24, 100.91, 102.98 and 106.88) for students whose parents held illiterate, primary, secondary, and university education respectively. To find out whether there were differences among means, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted and table (8) shows the related results.

Table (8) demonstrates statistically significant differences in the language

achievements attributed to parental educational level ($F=5.932$) which is statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$). Table (9) shows results from Scheffe post hoc comparisons test to find out resources of mean differences.

Table (9) shows that the mean difference between language achievements of students whose parents held illiterate versus primary education was ($M=0.67$) which is statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$).

Table (10)

Means and standard deviations of language achievement level by variable program type

Program Type	N	M	SD
Documentary			
Sports			
Foreign			
Artistic			
News			
Child			
Total			

Table (11)

Results from the variance analysis of the mean language achievements by program type

Variance Source	Total Squares	Freedom Degrees	Mean Squares	F-Value	<i>a</i>
Inter-group					
Intra-group					
Overall					

Table (11) shows statistically significant differences in language achievement levels attributed to TV programs watched ($F=3.895$) which is statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$). Scheffe post hoc comparisons test was conducted to reveal differences among means as shown by table.

Table (12) shows the mean difference ($M=7.779$) between language achievements of students viewed documentary versus sports programs which is statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$) in favor of documentary programs. This result indicates that the language achievement was better for documentary than for sports program viewers.

In addition, table (12) demonstrates the mean difference ($M=1.584$) between language achievements of students viewed documentary versus sports programs which

is statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) indicating that the language achievement was not better for documentary than for sports program viewers.

Further, the mean difference ($M=1.383$) between language achievements of students viewed documentary versus artistic programs which is statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$). This result indicates that the language achievement was not better for documentary than for artistic program viewers.

In addition, the mean difference ($M=0.8226$) between language achievements of students viewed documentary versus news programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for documentary than for news program viewers.

Table (12)

Results from Scheffe post hoc comparisons of mean language achievements by program type

Program Type	Documentary (102.51)	Sports (94.75)	Foreign (100.93)	Artistic (101.13)	News (101.69)	Child (105.0)
Documentary	-	*7.779	1.584	1.383	0.8226	2.484
Sports	-	-	6.915	6.397	*6.9565	10.263
Foreign	-	-	-	0.2025	0.7615	4.063
Artistic	-	-	-	-	0.559	3.8657
News	-	-	-	-	-	3.3067
Child	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$) level

Results from table (12) also demonstrates that the mean difference ($M=2.484$) between language achievements of students viewed documentary versus kid programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for kid than for documentary program viewers.

However, the mean difference ($M=6.915$) between language achievements of students viewed sports versus foreign programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for foreign than for sports program viewers.

Table (12) also demonstrates the mean difference ($M=6.397$) between language achievements of students viewed sports versus artistic programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for artistic than for sports program viewers.

Further, the mean difference ($M=6.9565$) between language achieve-

ments of students viewed sports versus news programs was statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$) in favor of news programs, indicating that the language achievement was better for news than for sports program viewers.

Along the same lines, table (12) shows the mean difference ($M=10.263$) between language achievements of students viewed sports versus kid programs was statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$) in favor of kid programs, indicating that the language achievement was better for kid than for sports program viewers.

Table (12) also shows that the mean difference ($M=0.2025$) between language achievements of students viewed foreign versus artistic programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$), indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for artistic than for foreign program viewers.

Further, as shown by table (12), the mean difference ($M=0.7615$) between language achievements of students viewed foreign versus news programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$), indicating

that the language achievement was not necessarily better for news than for foreign program viewers.

Results from table (12) reveal that the mean difference ($M=4.068$) between language achievements of students viewed foreign versus kid programs was statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$), indicating that the language achievement was not necessarily better for kid than for foreign program viewers.

In addition, table (12) shows that the mean difference ($M=0.559$) between language achievements of students viewed artistic versus news programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) demonstrating that the language achievement was not better for news than for artistic program viewers.

In the same context, results from table (12) showed that the mean difference ($M=3.8657$) between language achievements of students viewed artistic versus kid programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$) implying that the language achievement was not better for kid than for artistic program viewers.

Finally, statistical analysis results as shown in table (12) showed that the mean difference ($M=3.3067$) between language achievements of students viewed news versus kid programs was statistically insignificant at ($\alpha=0.05$), indicating that the language achievement was not better for kid than for news program viewers.

Discussion

Discussion of results related question one: "What is the language achievement level of first secondary grade students?"

Results regarding this question found that the language achievement level was above average. This result would be accounted for by a variety of enriching factors that increase language achievement of students including watching varied TV programs, curiosity perceived among students of this age, more mental growth, and improved thinking ability, all of which contributed to the heightened language achievement level of participants. This result is consistent with Abu Tharifa (2001) that emphasized that the TV cartoon films moderately affect child's language acquisition, expression ability, and fact repertoire. This result also receives support from Mirea Schalvon et al (1996) that emphasized the television influence on language and achievement; and from Mansour (1990) that showed statistically significant differences among mean estimates of the experimental versus control groups on the language arts and general facts tests in favor of the experimental group which exposed to the TV program. In addition, this result receives support from Macbeth (1996), Write et al (2001), and Comstock (1991) that stressed on the improved basic reading skills of students viewed educational programs.

Discussion of results related to question two: "Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to gender?"

Results regarding this question demonstrated statistically significant differences in language achievement attributed to gender among participants in favor of females, implying that language achievement was higher in females compared with males.

This result can be accounted for by the fact that females view TV programs more than males, due to their longer stay at home, whereas males would prefer hanging about with their peer groups or going out to clubs for activities than sitting to view television. Expectedly, language achievement level would be below that for females who are frequent viewers of the television because of their longer stay at home, and traditional habits dominating the Jordanian community that restricts girl's freedom and require them to stay at home which allow them longer free time to view television. Sometimes, females are required to watch documentary and news programs, and such kind of TV programs increases their language repertoire more than males. In accordance with psychologists, linguistically females grow faster than males, and thus television programs increase language development in females greater than males. This result is inconsistent with Barakat (1991) which found that although TV watching is gender neutral, it is affected by the socioeconomic status of participants, and females scheduled their TV watching times effectively more than males.

Discussion of results related to question three: "*Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to TV watching length?*"

Results related to this question demonstrated statistically significant differences attributed to TV watching length in favor of lengthy watch, i.e. the lengthy versus short TV watching increases language achievement in students. This result implies

that the longer the TV watching, the greater influence and language communication would take place; and the longer TV watching, the stronger the effect it leaves in viewer's mind which results in greater language achievement. This result is consistent with Gentile & Walsh (2002), Reinking & Wu (1990) which found positive relationship between language skills acquired by children and TV watching length.

Discussion of result related to question four: "*Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to TV programs watched?*"

Results concerning this question demonstrated statistically significant differences in language achievement attributed to type of TV programs watched. Results revealed that watching documentary programs increases language achievement more than sports programs. Similarly, news and kid programs improve language achievement more than sports programs. This result can be accounted for by the fact that documentary TV programs usually use intelligible words more than other programs. Viewers, in turn, would be more concentrated when viewing documentary programs, which helps improve their language skills. The documentary programs typically provide cultural content with accurate, coherent, and simple sentences that are easily understood by viewers. Comparatively, news and kid programs are considered favorable and harmonized with community value system that viewing such programs is usually encouraged; and further kid programs are preferred for the age group represented by

the sample in this study. Other program types have now association with the language achievement. This result would be due to their incoherence and using colloquial dialect as in the artistic programs. Viewers of artistic programs are mostly interested in dramatic events, plot more than verbal and linguistic expressions. As for sports programs, however desirable for youngsters, they include no or very little language vocabularies, and even if they do, such vocabularies will be sports-related which do very little to increase language repertoire of viewers. Results from this study are consistent with Kamal et al (1994) that demonstrated that children learn from television religious and general facts. Results from this study receive support from Potter (1990) that showed that the television influence is contingent on program type to which adolescent is exposed. Similarly, this result is supported by Abu Tharifa (2001) that found that animated cartoon films moderately affect language achievement and expressiveness of children.

Discussion of results related to question five "*Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in language achievement attributed to parental educational level?*"

Results regarding to this question demonstrated statistically significant differences in language achievement attributed to parental educational level in favor of university holders. Results indicated that students whose parents held university degree had language achievement greater than that of students with illiterate parents. This result can be

accounted for by the positive effect of the educational level of father and mother on TV programs viewed, as parents with higher educational level would select for children beneficial documentary, news, or kid programs that increase their language repertoire. However, parents holding higher educational levels would be more effective in acquiring their children new vocabularies through conversation and dialogue than parents with lower educational levels who would ineffectively schedule TV watching times for their children, usually indifferent about useful less useful programs, and lack sufficient vocabularies enabling them to communicate verbally with their children. This result was consistent with Aktan & Shafi (1978) which found a correlation between news quantity viewed by parents and that viewed by their children.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further studies:

As media means currently have become of paramount influence in molding conscious and language vocabularies of individuals, further studies which investigate in greater depth the impact of such media as TV, radio, and the Internet on the language achievement among learners are advisable as to the knowledge of authors there is dearth of relevant studies in this field.

Recommendations for practice:

1. Introducing media discourse that is animated, varied, realistic, and responding to the Arabic reality and reflects the val-

ues and language of the nation. The Arabic language, therefore, should be properly introduced as standard language free from vulgar or colloquial words, and free from inserted foreign words in the Arabic speech as commonly practiced in Arabic movies and cultural programs.

2. Increasing number of educational programs, basically Arabic as a second language, in response to the huge Western media broadcasting which purport to spread out the globalization through impacting nation's language that is its major identifying feature. Meaningful cultural programs that improve language skills among Arab viewers and encourage greater adherence to their language, identity and civilization should combat this tremendous inflow of the Western media broadcasts.

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