



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

**English-Spanish Translation of the Article
“University Students’ Beliefs about Learning English
and French in Lebanon” with an Analysis of the
Translation Techniques Employed.**

**TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO
Para obtener el grado de
*LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA***

**PRESENTA
Francisco Javier Angulo Blanco**

**SUPERVISORES
M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin
M.T.I. Argelia Peña Aguilar
Lic. Gabriel Ángel Lira Gutiérrez**

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COMITÉ DE SUPERVISIÓN

Supervisor: _____

M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin

Supervisor: _____

M.T.I. Argelia Peña Aguilar

Supervisor: _____

Lic. Gabriel Ángel Lira Gutiérrez

Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México, Septiembre de 2009.

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Introduction

Throughout human history many artistic expressions have come into existence. All of them express the beauty of our human spirit and let us know the power of our mind and body to create magic. As examples of all those fine representations of the way in which we conceive the world we can mention Music, Painting, Architecture, Dance, and Translation. Without translators, the artists of language, we would live in a dark world ignoring the existence of other cultures and idiosyncrasies.

That is why the transmission and practice of this art is of vital importance nowadays since it strengthens our cultural relations and is the one which could lead our world to its salvation as a mediator of thoughts and ideas.

For that reason, this translation is an attempt to contribute in a certain way to that process of transmission of significant knowledge.

This translation project addresses the need of language teachers and students who do not master English and consider of particular importance to know the results of studies related to students' beliefs about learning different languages in relation with those about learning English.

Nowadays language teachers and researchers are concerned about the importance of the role of learners. They take into account different characteristics such as motivations, attitudes, learning styles, social factors, and beliefs as important considerations while the language learning process takes place (Horwitz, 1987). The analysis of those factors and their influence on the learning process help teachers to understand the different phenomena in the classroom and give them an advantage that is important in order to develop a better performance in the

teaching process. The goal of educators is to facilitate the learning process for both sides, teacher and student, and the comprehension and awareness of things that could affect in a positive or a negative way such process constitute significant tools that would help accomplish this task.

Therefore, meticulous studies related to those factors have to be done and, since current researches come from all over the world and in different languages, translations play an important role to make all the information accessible to everyone.

It is important to mention that this project is not only useful to fulfill the needs of a few people, but also to offer the same information to all those teachers and students that do not have access to such studies because they do not master the language in which it is presented. It is not only a matter of interpretation or equivalence of languages; it steps up its primary degree of usefulness because it brings knowledge closer and makes it accessible to anyone.

With the study of this translated article, teachers and students will come up with different points of view and alternatives that may improve language teaching both in research and practicing.

Besides all that, this project includes an analysis of the techniques used in the translation process that aims at providing information and serving as an example for future works in the same field.

Justification

Due to the globalization process almost all cultures have been in contact. That has made some of them emerge as the more powerful ones, mainly because of economic reasons. Among all those dominant cultures, the ones whose principal language is English seem to have the control of the major aspects of human life such as education, science, technology, communication and business. However, there still exist some other cultures that need to have access to all the new incoming information. For that reason, translation plays a very important role nowadays.

This translation project was carried out in order to provide important information contained in the study "*University students' beliefs about learning English and French in Lebanon*" to all those who do not master English but have a particular interest in this kind of research.

In addition, this project addresses the need of a French teacher who wants to know the results of a study that will be of particular interest for her. She states that the translation of the study will help her in a great way for further research on the field of French teaching, which is also her practicing area. Since this French teacher always pursues excellence in her job, the translation project will be undoubtedly favorable for her particular purposes.

This project could be important also for language teachers and students who want to know about the influence of beliefs in the learning process of different target languages in relation to those held about English. After laying out the importance of the role of students in language learning, the study shows the beliefs

about the process of learning a new language in a Lebanese context and it also makes a comparison between learning beliefs of two target languages; English and French. Finally, it states in a statistical way how student's beliefs are related to variables such as language medium, educational background and gender. Those results give a broader view of how students' beliefs about English and French influence their language learning process. This study could be very important for language teachers and students because it would give them an idea of how to interpret their beliefs and to know how they could influence the learning process.

This translation could also be functional as a reference for those who are aiming to conduct a study of the same kind and need additional information of methods and instruments to carry it out.

Since it contains a diversity of technical and specific words used in the educational field, this translation could serve as a reference for other translations which handle the same terminology and concepts. This paper could also be handy for other translator who would like to make an analysis or description of the translator strategies and the use of the different translation techniques.

Finally, it would be important to mention that with the study of this translated article readers would have a broader idea of how different factors in different contexts could influence beliefs about language learning and how those beliefs could also determine the success or the failure of learning languages.

Objectives

One of the objectives of this translation project is to make the important information contained in the study "*University students' beliefs about learning English and French in Lebanon*" accessible to every Spanish reader who would consider it important for their particular reasons.

This translation project aims also to contribute to the wonderful world of translation studies and the educational field and at the same time to provide an accurate work that could serve as reference for future ones.

But the most important objective is to share my love and respect for translation with everyone.

Methodology

The nature of the translated text is merely informative, according to one of the distinctions among the three basic functions of language made by Bühler (1934). According to the definition of Christopher Taylor, it can be said that the type of text is technical, due to the kind of content of the article. The terminology presented has the nature of specialized vocabulary, and this is one feature that demonstrates why this is considered to be a technical text.

During the process of translation, several different tools were used. Along with dictionaries, the computer constituted an important and fundamental aid. The use of a computer allowed the performance of different tasks, such as typing, consulting online dictionaries, encyclopedias and articles; and even the use of software commonly employed in the field of translation. The advantages of using a computer as a tool are uncountable, and this is why it results appropriate to comment on it.

Even though online dictionaries are taking over, printed versions still have popularity nowadays and still represent one of the most important tools for translators. Bilingual dictionaries are the most frequently used to carry out translations. However, there are other kinds which provide a wide range of possibilities. The monolingual, synonyms-antonyms, as well as specialized ones are some of them. It is important to take into account that different dictionaries were helpful for the purposes of this project.

Online dictionaries have come to gain popularity in the translation field. They are quite effective, fast, and they provide several possible meanings to concepts.

Moreover, for particular terms or phrases that cannot be found in the database, they have special discussion boards in which linguists, professors, native speakers, and others share ideas and points of view regarding the translation of a word within a specific context, until they reach the best option. A good example of an online version dictionary is Word Reference Online Dictionary.

Glossaries were also considered during the translation process because they sometimes provided the best option for the translation of specialized words.

Articles of the same nature focused on the educational field and also on statistics were useful to carry out this translation project. They provided hints on what kind of language, register, and vocabulary was required. Texts and articles related to statistics were highly useful, for instance, for helping the translator get familiarized with key terms found along the article to be translated.

The checklist proposed by Morry Sofer (2003), which contains some of the most important points that translators should take into account during and after the translation process, was also important since it showed aspects which helped to obtain an accurate translation.

The translation of the article followed stages that had more or less the same level of importance because they were interrelated among themselves. That is why the translation was developed along with the identification of translation methods which were used. This was done in order to facilitate the process by pointing out the exact page, paragraph and line in which a specific method was used. It is important to remember that within the same phrase or paragraph, a number of methods can be found. Consequently, some methods were not mentioned

whenever they were used but only when they constituted an interesting example to be presented.

After the methods were pointed out it was necessary to return to those references to make sure they are actual equivalents as at first they were considered to be. In this part of the process a deeper analysis took place not only to prove that the methods mentioned are correct, but also to describe the process of each event in which certain technique was used. For instance, if modulation was made, it was not enough to recall only the method's name, but also to state why this particular example is considered to be factual evidence of the modulation method. The same was applied to the rest of the methods.

In short, the analysis comprises a description, explanation, and examples of the different methods and techniques that were encountered during the process of translation.

Finally, there was a last review of the analysis along with the translation in order to see if they match.

The analysis of the translation constitutes the most complex part of translation; however, both the translation and the analysis itself were quite demanding and interesting tasks to accomplish.

It is very important to mention that the three supervisors chosen to direct this project played an essential role. Since they are experts in the area of translation, their guidance was fundamental to avoid errors and to clarify different aspects about sense and meaning of words and phrases.

Theoretical Framework

The translation of the article involves an exhaustive process in which different procedures are carried out. The use of the already published and widely known translation techniques and strategies is the most common. For that, it will be of vital importance to state and define all the concepts that describe those methods and the levels of translation that were taken into account during the development of the project. But first, it is necessary to understand the concept and the variants of translation.

Translation is a process in which a natural equivalent of a given message in a source language is produced, taking into account primarily the meaning of the message and then the linguistic style (Nida, 1959).

Word-for-word translation consists on giving the first definition of words and keeping the original order of the words from the original message so that the target message remains closely linked to the language employed in the source message (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958).

Literal translation, which is similar to word-for-word translation, has to do with the regularization of things syntactically. This kind of translation follows closely the form of the source language (Larson, 1984).

Free translation is the one which addresses the reproduction of the general meaning of the message, no matter if it does not fit with the form or organization of the original one (Pei and Gaynor, 1954).

Due to the technical nature of the article, this translation project was carried out within the guidelines of free and also literal translation since they comprise all

the characteristics that should be taken into account to obtain accurate and effective results.

Now, the description of the techniques and processes that were used during the translation process will be done. These are the most common and known techniques proposed by Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1958):

- a) **Borrowing:** Is the simplest of all translation techniques and it is used in order to introduce the color of the source language culture into the translation. Borrowing is used as a matter of style and is employed when a word is more suitable to be used or known in the target language.
- b) **Calque:** Is a special kind of borrowing in which a language borrows an expression form of another and translates literally each of its elements.
- c) **Literal translation:** Is the direct transfer of a message into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate target language. With this technique, the translator only observes the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the target language.
- d) **Transposition:** Consists on the replacement of one word class with another without changing the meaning of the original message. Transposition also occurs within a language. Translators must choose to carry out a transposition if the obtained translation fits better into the expression, or allows a particular touch of style to be retained. The transposed form is generally more literary in character.
- e) **Modulation:** Is a variation of the form of the message which is produced by a change of the point of view. This change is justified when one translation results in an unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward utterance even when it is grammatically correct.

- f) **Equivalence:** Consists of representing the same situation in two texts -source and target message- using completely different stylistic and structural methods. In most cases equivalences are already fixed and belong to a phraseological collection of idioms, clichés, proverbs, and nominal or adjectival phrases.
- g) **Adaptation:** It is used in those cases where the type of situation being described by the source language does not exist in the target language culture. In those cases, the translator task is to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent. Adaptation is a situational equivalence.

There exist other two methods employed during a translation task, and Vazquez Ayora (1977) describes them with the following definitions:

- h) **Addition:** It consists of adding more words into the target message in order to make it clearer. Additions could be made for extralinguistic reasons or because of syntactic restructuring of sentences in the target language to make them more natural.
- i) **Omission:** It is used when it is necessary to omit redundancy or repetition. It is advisable to omit terms or words that express a meaning that could be inferred from the context.

All these techniques are employed at the three levels of expression which are lexis, syntactic structure, and message (Venuti, 2004). It is important to mention that several of these methods can be used within the same sentence and that some translations are the product of a complex mixture of such techniques; it means that sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish them. For that, an exhaustive analysis is of vital importance after finishing the translation.

For the purpose of this analysis it is necessary to make a revision of the final translation. According to Morry Sofer (2003) the use of a checklist with some of the most important points which translators should take into account plays a very important role for this task.

The following are the aspects proposed by Sofer (2003):

- a) **Omission:** Did you fail to translate any particular word or phrase, or even a paragraph?
- b) **Format:** Does your format follow the original?
- c) **Mistranslation:** Did you mistranslate any particular word?
- d) **Unknown words:** Were there words you were not able to translate which you would like to explore further?
- e) **Meaning:** Did you miss the meaning of any phrase or sentence?
- f) **Spelling:** Did you misspell any word which the spell-check function did not catch?
- g) **Grammar:** Did you make any grammatical mistake?
- h) **Punctuation:** Did you mispunctuate or miss any punctuation marks?
- i) **Clarity:** Did you fail to clearly convey the meaning of any particular part of the text?
- j) **Consistency:** Did you call something by one name and then by another without any good reason?
- k) **“Sound-alike” words:** Did you mistranslate a word because it looks or sounds like the word in the target language but it has a different meaning?
- l) **Style:** Are you satisfied with the way your translation reflects the style of the original text?

This very useful checklist would help to obtain a better result and also to facilitate the analysis process.

In a project of this kind, it is very important to establish the type of text to be translated. This is in order to define the type of register that will be used throughout the translation, to look for technical concepts if needed, and to have a better idea of the style the translator wants to make use of.

In this particular case, the article is a technical text. According to Christopher Taylor (1998), technical texts are those which are specialized to deal with a specific task in hand. They are oriented to different disciplines such as medicine, physics, astronomy, and others. They also respond to fields of applied technology and even less scientific areas. This kind of texts employs specialized or technical terminology.

It is also necessary to establish the function of the text along with its type. For this particular purpose it is important to take into account one of the distinctions made by Bühler (1934) of the three basic functions of language.

The referential or informative function, which is the one of providing information about the facts and events of the real world, is the one that fits better with the informative nature of the article to be translated. Hence, and considering also the definition provided by Taylor (1998), the text on which this project is developed is a technical text of informative function.

Translation

Creencias de Estudiantes Universitarios acerca del Aprendizaje de Inglés y Francés en Líbano

Rula L. Diab

*Departamento de Inglés, Facultad de Artes y Ciencias, Universidad Americana de Beirut,
Apartado Postal 11-0236, Beirut, Líbano*

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Resumen

Este estudio exploró las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes universitarios libaneses de inglés como lengua extranjera, comparó sus creencias acerca de aprender diferentes lenguas meta, a saber, inglés y francés, e investigó la variación dentro de grupo de estas creencias de los estudiantes. Se administró una versión modificada del "Inventario de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de idiomas" (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) de Horwitz a 284 estudiantes en tres universidades en Líbano. Las conclusiones revelaron que los estudiantes poseen una variedad de creencias acerca del aprendizaje de inglés y francés, muchas de las cuales parecen estar relacionadas con el contexto político y sociocultural de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Líbano. Notablemente, las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad del aprendizaje de lenguas y sus motivaciones para aprender inglés y francés parecen estar especialmente contextualizadas en la situación de aprendizaje de lenguas en Líbano. Los estudiantes ven el inglés como un idioma fácil y al francés como uno difícil y, concordando con una creencia popular que se tiene en Líbano, estuvieron de acuerdo con que es "más fácil" aprender francés antes de aprender inglés. Además, la mayoría de los estudiantes revelaron una fuerte motivación instrumental por aprender inglés y concordaron en que el aprender inglés es más importante que aprender francés. Finalmente, se encontraron diferencias estadísticamente importantes en las creencias de los estudiantes relacionadas con variables tales como el idioma empleado en la formación educativa y género.

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Palabras clave: Creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas, BALLI, motivación, inglés como lengua extranjera, francés como lengua extranjera, Líbano, factores sociopolíticos en el aprendizaje de lenguas, diferencias individuales, idioma empleado en la formación educativa.

Correo electrónico: rd10@aub.edu.lb.

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1. Introducción

Actualmente, los maestros de lenguas e investigadores dan mucha importancia al papel del alumno. Características tales como estilos de aprendizaje, estrategias, actitudes y motivaciones, sólo por mencionar algunas, son comúnmente vistas como factores esenciales para ser considerados en el proceso de aprendizaje de una lengua. Una de las variables de las que más se discute recientemente en este campo es las creencias del estudiante acerca del aprendizaje de idiomas, que hace referencia a las opiniones que los estudiantes tienen acerca de varios aspectos del aprendizaje de lenguas (Horwitz, 1987a). Dichas creencias han sido relacionadas con otras variables del estudiante, principalmente estrategias para el aprendizaje de lenguas (Horwitz, 1987a, 1988; Park, 1995; Wenden, 1986, 1987; Yang, 1992) y la ansiedad ante una lengua extranjera (Horwitz, 1988, 1989; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kunt, 1997; Oh, 1996; Truitt, 1995; Young, 1991). Ciertas creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas también podrían afectar la motivación de los estudiantes para aprender una lengua meta. Por ejemplo, creencias poco realistas en lo que concierne a la cantidad de tiempo que se necesita para volverse competente en una segunda lengua pueden obviamente traer como resultado frustración (Cohen y Dornyei, 2002). El importante trabajo de Zimmerman y Schunk (2001) enfocado en aprendizaje autorregulado también discute el papel central que tienen las creencias como influencia en la motivación de los estudiantes para aprender. Con respecto al origen de las creencias de los estudiantes, Horwitz (1987a) plantea que las experiencias previas como estudiantes de lenguas así como también el entorno cultural probablemente influyen y dan forma a las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas.

De acuerdo con Horwitz (1987a), el estudiar las creencias de los estudiantes acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas es importante no sólo porque dichas creencias pueden influir en las expectativas de los estudiantes y su compromiso con el aprendizaje de lenguas, sino también porque dichas creencias pueden estar más propensas a cambiar que las variables de estilo cognitivo o

variables afectivas tales como actitudes y motivaciones. El “Inventario de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de idiomas” (BALLI, por sus siglas en inglés), desarrollado por Horwitz para evaluar sistemáticamente las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas ha sido utilizado con estudiantes de lengua extranjera (LE) y de inglés como segunda lengua (ISL) en EU (Horwitz, 1987, 1988, 1989; Kuntz, 1996; Oh, 1996) así como también con estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) en el extranjero. Los grupos de ILE que han sido participantes en estudios que utilizan el BALLI incluyen estudiantes taiwaneses (Yang, 1992), coreanos (Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995), chinos (Su, 1995; Wang, 1996), turcos y turco-chipriotas (Kunt, 1997).

A pesar de que existe un creciente número de estudios que investigan las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas en diferentes grupos de estudiantes de ILE provenientes de diversos antecedentes culturales, ningún estudio ha explorado todavía las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes libaneses de ILE, quienes a diferencia de la mayoría de los otros estudiantes de ILE examinados hasta la fecha en estudios que utilizan el BALLI, han sido expuestos a dos lenguas extranjeras en el contexto multilingüe libanés: Inglés y francés. Por lo tanto, este estudio incluye un primer intento de investigación para comparar las creencias de los estudiantes acerca del aprendizaje de distintas lenguas metas. Además, el presente estudio proporciona datos preliminares de las diferencias en las creencias de los estudiantes debido a factores generados dentro del grupo. De acuerdo con Horwitz (1999), variables como edad, género y etapa en el aprendizaje de lenguas pueden constituir importantes fuentes de variaciones dentro del grupo en las creencias de los estudiantes acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas y por lo tanto deben ser examinadas más de cerca en estudios enfocados a las creencias de los estudiantes. Por consiguiente, este estudio ha abordado las tres siguientes preguntas de investigación:

1. ¿Cuáles son las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas en general, del aprendizaje de inglés y del aprendizaje de francés de estudiantes universitarios de ILE en Líbano?

2. ¿Cómo se comparan las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de inglés de estudiantes de ILE en Líbano con sus creencias acerca de aprender francés?
3. ¿Existe alguna diferencia de creencias estadísticamente importante entre los estudiantes universitarios de ILE en Líbano relacionada con factores como género, campo de especialización o idioma empleado en la formación educativa (inglés vs. francés)?

2. Enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Líbano

Un estudio que investigue las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes universitarios de ILE en Líbano debe tomar en cuenta el particular contexto libanés de enseñanza y aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras. Antes de embarcarse en dicho estudio es importante discutir la situación lingüística en Líbano, en general, y el estatus y rol del inglés, en particular. Sin embargo, un debate a profundidad sobre estas áreas va más allá del alcance de este estudio. Por lo tanto, una breve visión general de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Líbano será presentada a continuación. Para un análisis más riguroso de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en el contexto libanés, el lector que esté interesado puede consultar la obra de Diab (2000), que incluye una breve reseña histórica de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Líbano, una visión general del estatus y rol actual del inglés en el contexto libanés y un debate acerca de los principales factores políticos y socioculturales que influyen en la motivación y la actitud con respecto al aprendizaje del inglés de los estudiantes libaneses de ILE.

La llegada de misioneros occidentales en los siglos 18 y 19, la colonización por parte de Francia justo después del final de la Primera Guerra Mundial hasta la independencia de Líbano en 1943 y la aparición del inglés como lengua líder internacional para negocios, tecnología y comunicación, fueron una influencia muy importante en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, principalmente para el inglés y el francés en Líbano. Siguiendo el establecimiento de lazos religiosos entre diversas comunidades religiosas

libanesas y el occidente, misioneros de diferentes religiones fundaron varias escuelas en el país, exponiendo a los libaneses a las lenguas y culturas del occidente. De acuerdo con Shaaban y Ghait (1999), los más activos de estos misioneros fueron los Jesuitas franceses y los protestantes americanos. Asimismo, durante el periodo de mandato francés (1920-1943), la lengua francesa, además del árabe, se convirtió en lengua oficial en Líbano; el francés era enseñado en todas las escuelas y era utilizado para enseñar ciencias, matemáticas y ciencias sociales en todos los niveles de educación (Shaaban and Ghait, 1999).

Después de la independencia libanesa en 1943, el árabe se convirtió en la única lengua oficial en el Líbano; además, en 1964 el inglés (junto con el francés) se convirtió en una de las dos lenguas extranjeras enseñadas obligatoriamente en escuelas secundarias y el plan de estudios oficial del gobierno libanés para escuelas públicas dio igual importancia al francés y al inglés. Asimismo, varios decretos concernientes a la enseñanza de lenguas fueron publicados, muchos de los cuales buscaban fortalecer el rol del árabe en la educación y que éste se usara como medio de enseñanza. Sin embargo, estos decretos fueron en su mayoría expresiones precipitadas de orgullo nacionalista y no el resultado de una planeación meticulosa; el hecho fue que el francés y el inglés estaban “arraigados profundamente en el sistema educativo libanés” (Shaaban and Ghaith, 1996, p.101) y los dos permanecieron dominantes como medio de enseñanza en muchas escuelas libanesas. Mayormente, fueron razones económicas las que contribuyeron con esta difusión de las lenguas extranjeras como medio de enseñanza, especialmente el inglés, que en esa época empezaba a volverse más importante que el francés en Líbano, principalmente por la influencia internacional de los Estados Unidos y la creciente importancia del inglés en negocios internacionales, ciencia y tecnología.

De hecho, de acuerdo con Shaaban y Ghaith (1999), el tradicional conflicto lingüístico-cultural entre el árabe y las lenguas extranjeras como medio de enseñanza ahora está pasando a ser “multilingüalismo completamente

desarrollado en la sociedad así como también en la educación” (p. 1) y está siendo gradualmente reemplazado por una lucha entre el inglés y el francés, con el inglés ganando terreno hasta el momento, principalmente por factores prácticos y económicos. Siguiendo la misma línea, Constantine(1995) sostiene que la importancia de la cultura y la lengua francesa en Líbano se han debilitado gradualmente, principalmente por la competencia de la cultura americana. Por otra parte, Joseph (2004), quien proporciona una revisión de patrones de lengua/identidad libaneses, sostiene que, a pesar del hecho de que el dominio del inglés es altamente valorizado en la actualidad en Líbano y que las recientes políticas educativas libanesas abogan por un trilingüismo de árabe-inglés-francés, el bilingüismo árabe-francés permanece como una marca prominente para muchos libaneses, particularmente para los Cristianos. Sin embargo, en una encuesta realizada a residentes adultos en el área del Gran Beirut acerca de sus actitudes hacia aprender inglés y francés en Líbano, Ghaleb y Joseph (2000) encontraron que mientras el inglés y el francés figuraban como importantes entre los participantes de la encuesta, el inglés fue considerado el más importante de los dos para aquellos que eligieron únicamente una lengua, incluso para los participantes cristianos.

De este modo, hoy el consenso general es que el inglés es esencial para todo libanés, mientras que el francés puede ser importante para ciertos grupos, principalmente para aquellos que han sido históricamente afiliados a la cultura y la lengua francesa. En efecto, el hecho es que la mayoría de los estudiantes libaneses en la actualidad pertenecen a uno de los dos tipos de escuela dominantes: de “medio inglés” y de “medio francés”. La encuesta de Shaaban y Ghaith (2003) sobre las percepciones de estudiantes universitarios acerca de la utilidad del árabe, inglés y francés en Líbano reveló que la formación en una lengua en el medio o la primera lengua extranjera estudiada en la escuela (inglés vs. francés) influyen en las actitudes lingüísticas de los estudiantes en Líbano hacia estas tres lenguas. De hecho, el ser educado en francés o inglés es una marca sobresaliente de identidad en Líbano. Para muchos libaneses, el estudiar en una escuela de medio francés y dominar dicha lengua es una parte

esencial de lo que ellos son. Dichas personas probablemente hablan francés, además del árabe, mayormente en casa y dan mucha importancia al prestigio y valor de éste.

Por consiguiente, la lengua empleada en la formación educativa podría obviamente jugar un papel muy importante como influencia de las orientaciones motivacionales de los estudiantes libaneses con respecto a aprender inglés y francés.

En la clásica teoría de la motivación de Gardner (1985) que enfatiza la naturaleza sociocultural de la motivación en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua, dos amplias tendencias motivacionales son tratadas: integral e instrumental. Mientras la última refleja un motivo pragmático para aprender una segunda lengua, como conseguir un mejor trabajo, la primera es un indicio de actitudes positivas hacia el grupo de L2 y el deseo de volverse similar a los miembros del grupo de esta lengua meta. Aunque las razones instrumentales para aprender inglés dominan en la actualidad, en la situación socio-cultural de aprendizaje de lenguas en Líbano se cree que los estudiantes que han formado parte de escuelas de medio francés están probablemente de igual manera íntegramente motivados para aprender francés. Sus contrapartes de formación educativa de medio inglés, están probablemente de acuerdo con que aprender inglés es más importante que el aprender francés en Líbano y están probablemente menos motivados integralmente para aprender francés.

3. Método

3.1 Participantes

Los participantes en este estudio fueron 284 universitarios libaneses inscritos en cursos de inglés en la Universidad Americana de Beirut (AUB), La Universidad Libanesa Americana (LAU), y la universidad de Balamand (UOB). 57% de los participantes eran hombres y el 43% mujeres, con un rango de edades de 18 a 23, con una media de edad de 19. De los 284 participantes 281 aseguraron que su lengua materna es el árabe, mientras los tres restantes

especificaron que su lengua materna es el armenio. Además, el 45% de los estudiantes habían asistido a escuelas de medio inglés mientras el 43 % habían estudiado en escuelas de medio francés.

3.2 Instrumentos

El cuestionario usado en este estudio consiste en una versión modificada del Inventario de Creencias Sobre el Aprendizaje de Idiomas (BALLI, versión ISL/ILE, Horwitz, 1987b) y un cuestionario de antecedentes diseñado por el investigador para obtener información sobre los antecedentes de los estudiantes, como su edad, género, lengua empleada en su formación educativa, campo de estudio y su experiencia viviendo o visitando algún país de habla inglesa.

De acuerdo con Horwitz (1999), aunque una gran variedad de grupos culturales contribuyeron a su desarrollo, el BALLI busca obtener “creencias comúnmente arraigadas,” y durante su desarrollo los puntos idiosincrásicos fueron eliminados del inventario. Además, ella recomienda que los estudios de investigación sobre creencias de cierto grupo cultural contemplan identificar y tal vez agregar creencias específicas a la población objetivo. Igualmente, Benson y Lor (1999) aseguran que las creencias acerca del aprendizaje no deben ser observadas de manera independiente al contexto y Sakui y Gaies (1999) resaltaron la necesidad de desarrollar instrumentos “dependientes del contexto” para medir creencias y crearon una escala orientada a las creencias relevantes en el aprendizaje de inglés en Japón.

Así mismo, en este estudio se hizo un esfuerzo para adicionar creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas que son particulares del contexto libanés. Un estudio piloto que consiste de entrevistas a 20 estudiantes universitarios libaneses de ILE fue llevado a cabo con el fin de obtener cualquier creencia acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas que pudiera ser única de la población meta y que además pudiera ser agregada a los reactivos del BALLI. Basándose en los resultados, se modificaron varios reactivos de la escala original de 34 del BALLI, siendo de mayor importancia la adición de varios reactivos específicos

basados en el contexto y la división de la escala en cuatro secciones: (1) creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras en general (2) creencias acerca del aprendizaje del inglés (12 reactivos), (3) creencias acerca del aprendizaje del francés (12 reactivos; idénticas a las de la sección dos excepto las relacionadas con el francés) y (4) creencias acerca del aprendizaje de distintas lenguas en Líbano, a saber inglés, francés, y árabe (cuatro reactivos específicos basados en el contexto orientados a las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la importancia y dificultad relativa de aprender árabe, inglés y francés en Líbano).

4. Resultados

Dado que el BALLI mide varias creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas, no cede el paso a una simple puntuación global; las respuestas a cada determinado reactivo son consideradas de manera separada (Horwitz, 1987a). Además, análisis factoriales y de componentes principales se llevaron a cabo para obtener estimados de los componentes iniciales y para determinar los factores subyacentes que representan los datos. Los resultados de este análisis factorial son presentados a continuación, seguidos de los resultados del Análisis Multivariado de Varianza (MANOVA, por sus siglas en inglés) llevado a cabo para examinar la influencia de las variables de factores de antecedentes en las creencias de los estudiantes con respecto al aprendizaje de lenguas. Los puntajes de factores obtenidos del análisis factorial fueron utilizados como variables dependientes en el MANOVA. Una comparación de los resultados de este estudio con aquellos obtenidos en otros estudios de BALLI de diferentes grupos de estudiantes de ILE va más allá de los alcances de este documento y es presentado en Diab (2004), que compara las creencias de estudiantes universitarios libaneses de este estudio con las de estudiantes de ILE taiwaneses (Yang, 1992), coreanos (Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995), chinos (Su, 1995; Wang, 1996) y turcochipriotas (Kunt, 1997).

4.1 Análisis factorial: Creencias sobre el aprendizaje del inglés

De acuerdo con el análisis de componentes principales cinco factores conformaron la variación de puntaje en la información de las “creencias sobre el aprendizaje del inglés”; sin embargo, el gráfico de sedimentación y las consideraciones de interpretabilidad sugirieron que una solución de cuatro factores era más apropiada. Los cuatro factores extraídos representaron un 50.2% de la varianza total. Seguidamente la rotación Varimax fue utilizada para hacer los factores más interpretables. La tabla 1 presenta un resumen de los resultados del análisis de factores de la información de las “creencias sobre el aprendizaje del inglés.” La saturación factorial de cada reactivo en esta sección en los cuatro factores rotados y las frecuencias de respuesta (en porcentaje), medios y desviaciones estándares de los reactivos que tendían a .40 o más en cada factor son proporcionados en el apéndice A.

El primer factor obtuvo altas tendencias en los siguientes dos reactivos: “Disfruto practicar inglés con los hablantes nativos del inglés que me encuentro” y “me gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos del inglés;” además aparentemente muestra una dimensión que refleja la confianza de los estudiantes para hablar inglés con los hablantes nativos y tal vez de manera más general su motivación integral por aprender y hablar inglés. El segundo factor obtuvo altas tendencias hacia los puntos como “siento pena al hablar inglés con otras personas” y “es más fácil leer y escribir en inglés que el hablarlo y entenderlo”. Al mismo tiempo, las expectativas generales de los estudiantes

Tabla 1
Análisis de factores: creencias sobre el aprendizaje del inglés

Factor	Descripción	Valor propio	% de varianza	% Acumulado
1	Motivación integral para aprender inglés	1.717	14.306	14.306
2	La dificultad de hablar y aprender inglés	1.662	13.846	28.152
3	La importancia de la precisión al hablar inglés	1.389	11.579	39.730

acerca de la dificultad para aprender inglés generaron también en este factor altas tendencias pero en dirección negativa; además este factor parece representar una dimensión que refleja las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad o frente a la facilidad de aprender y hablar inglés.

El tercer factor arrojó altas tendencias en reactivos tales como: “es importante hablar inglés con una pronunciación excelente,” “si se le permite a los estudiantes principiantes cometer errores, les será difícil hablar correctamente más adelante,” y “es necesario saber acerca de las culturas de habla inglesa para poder hablar inglés.” Un punto que dio resultados negativos en este factor es “está bien el adivinar el significado de una palabra en inglés si no la conoces.” De este modo, este factor parece representar de manera general una dimensión que refleja las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la importancia de la precisión y propiedad al aprender y hablar inglés. Finalmente, los dos reactivos que arrojaron altas tendencias en el cuarto factor son “La gente de Líbano cree que es importante hablar inglés” y “en Líbano es más importante hablar inglés que francés.” De este modo, este factor refleja obviamente una dimensión al representar las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la importancia de hablar inglés en Líbano.

4.2 Análisis de factores: creencias sobre el aprendizaje del francés

Basados en el análisis de componentes principales, una solución de cuatro factores se obtuvo de los puntajes de la información sobre las “creencias sobre el aprendizaje del francés. Los cuatro factores extraídos conformaron un 51.1% de la varianza total. Seguidamente la rotación Varimax fue utilizada para hacer más interpretables los factores. La tabla 2 presenta un resumen de los resultados del análisis de factores de la información de las “creencias sobre el aprendizaje de francés”. La saturación factorial de cada punto en esta sección en los cuatro factores rotados y las frecuencias de respuestas (en porcentaje),

los instrumentos, y las desviaciones estándares de los puntos que tendían a .40 o más en cada factor son proporcionados en el apéndice B.

En el primer factor se obtuvieron altas tendencias en reactivos tales como “me gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos de francés” y “disfruto practicando francés con los hablantes nativos de francés que me encuentro.” Un reactivo que generó tendencias negativas en este factor es “siento pena la hablar francés con otras personas.” Además, las expectativas generales de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad de aprender francés también generaron altas tendencias en este factor. De este modo, el primer factor parece representar una dimensión que refleja la motivación de los estudiantes por aprender francés y su confianza al aprender y hablar esta lengua. El segundo factor obtuvo altas tendencias en reactivos tales como “es necesario saber acerca de las culturas de habla francesa para poder hablar francés,” “es más fácil leer y escribir en francés que hablarlo y entenderlo” y “es importante hablar francés con una excelente pronunciación.” Así, este factor parece representar generalmente una dimensión que refleja las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la naturaleza de aprender francés. Las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la relativa aptitud de hombres y mujeres para aprender francés generaron también altas tendencias en este factor.

El reactivo “la gente de Líbano cree que es importante hablar francés” arrojó altas tendencias en dirección positiva en el tercer factor, mientras que el reactivo “es más importante hablar inglés que francés en Líbano” arrojó altas tendencias pero hacia una dirección negativa. Así, este factor, que paralelo al cuarto factor fundamentado por la información de las creencias acerca del aprendizaje del inglés, “la importancia del inglés en Líbano,” obviamente refleja

Tabla 2
Análisis de factores: creencias sobre el aprendizaje del francés

Factor	Descripción	Valor propio	% de varianza	% Acumulado
1	Motivación/confianza para hablar francés	2.339	19.492	14.492

2	La naturaleza del aprendizaje del francés	1.606	13.385	32.877
3	La importancia del francés en Líbano	1.128	9.398	42.275
4	La importancia de la precisión al hablar francés	1.053	8.775	51.051

una dimensión presentando las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la importancia de hablar francés en Líbano. Finalmente, el reactivo de “está bien el adivinar el significado de una palabra en francés si no la conoces” arrojó altas tendencias pero en dirección negativa en el cuarto factor, mientras que el reactivo “es importante hablar francés con una excelente pronunciación” también tuvo tendencias positivas moderadas en este factor. De este modo, este cuarto factor parece representar las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la importancia en la precisión y propiedad al aprender y hablar francés.

4.3 MANOVA: influencia de las variables de formación educativa – Creencias acerca del aprendizaje de inglés

Dos fuentes de variaciones dentro del grupo reveladas por el MANOVA aplicado a los resultados de los factores de información sobre “creencias sobre el aprendizaje de inglés” son el idioma empleado en la formación educativa y la experiencia de visitar o vivir en un país de habla inglesa. Primero un MANOVA llevado a cabo para examinar la influencia del idioma empleado en la formación educativa en los resultados de los cuatro factores fue significativo al $p < .05$. ANOVAs post hoc revelaron que el ANOVA para el segundo factor, “la dificultad de hablar y aprender inglés,” fue significativo al $p < .05$ ($F=4.267$; quiere decir: medio inglés = $-.09$; medio francés = $.18$). Además, un MANOVA llevado a cabo para examinar la influencia de la experiencia de visitar o vivir en un país de habla inglesa en los resultados obtenidos en esta sección fue significativo a $p < .001$. ANOVAS Post hoc revelaron que nuevamente el ANOVA para el segundo factor, “la dificultad para aprender y hablar inglés,” fue significativo ($F=8.652$; $p < .001$; quiere decir: Ha vivido en un país de habla inglesa = $-.50$; Ha visitado un país de habla inglesa = $-.13$; Nunca ha estado en un país de habla inglesa = $.17$). Un análisis post hoc (prueba HSD de Turkey) reveló una diferencia significativa entre los estudiantes que han vivido en un país de habla inglesa y los que jamás han

visitado uno ($p < .001$). Las tablas fuentes de información de los dos ANOVAs significativos presentados en esta sección son mostradas en el apéndice C.

4.4 MANOVA: influencia de las variables de formación educativa – Creencias acerca del aprendizaje del francés

Dos fuentes de variaciones dentro de grupo reveladas por el MANOVA aplicado a los resultados de los factores de información sobre “creencias sobre el aprendizaje de francés” son el idioma empleado en la formación educativa y el género. Primero, un MANOVA llevado a cabo para examinar la influencia del idioma empleado en la formación educativa en los resultados de los cuatro factores fue significativo al $p < .001$. ANOVAs post hoc revelaron que el ANOVA para el factor 1 “motivación/confianza para hablar francés” fue significativo al $p < .001$ ($F = 84.710$; quiere decir: Medio inglés = $-.55$; Medio francés = $.49$). En segundo lugar, un MANOVA llevado a cabo para examinar la influencia del género en los resultados obtenidos en esta sección fue significativo a $p < .01$. ANOVAs post hoc revelaron que el ANOVA para el factor 1: “motivación/confianza para hablar francés,” fue significativa a $p < .01$ ($F = 10.378$; quiere decir: Hombres = $-.18$; Mujeres = $.22$). Las tablas fuente de información de los dos ANOVAs significativos presentados en esta sección son mostradas en el apéndice D.

5. Discusión

Con el fin de proporcionar una discusión significativa, los resultados del análisis factorial y del MANOVA serán discutidos simultáneamente, con un enfoque en las siguientes categorías identificadas en el análisis factorial: La importancia de la precisión al hablar inglés y francés, la dificultad para aprender inglés y francés y las motivaciones hacia el aprendizaje de inglés y francés.

5.1 La importancia de la precisión al hablar inglés y francés

Una categoría muy importante de creencias que emergió del análisis factorial es la creencia de los estudiantes sobre la importancia de la precisión al hablar inglés y francés. En general, los estudiantes parecen minimizar la importancia de

la precisión y aprueban estrategias comúnmente asociadas con enfoques basados en la comunicación para la enseñanza de lenguas. Por ejemplo, la mayoría de los estudiantes (72%) estuvo de acuerdo en que es aceptable adivinar si no se conoce una palabra en inglés (60% estuvieron de acuerdo para francés) y 50% estuvieron en desacuerdo con el hecho de que el permitirle cometer errores a estudiantes de nivel principiante de inglés les dificultará hablar correctamente más adelante (sin embargo, únicamente 39% estuvieron en desacuerdo para francés). Por otra parte, la mayoría de los estudiantes parece dar un valor muy importante a la pronunciación, ya que el 73% estuvo de acuerdo en que el hablar inglés con una excelente pronunciación es importante (69% estuvieron de acuerdo con respecto al francés).

Notablemente, sin importar la tendencia de las respuestas (acuerdo o desacuerdo), las respuestas a los reactivos concernientes al inglés fueron más fuertes que aquellos concernientes al francés, excepto por los dos reactivos relacionados con la pronunciación, en los cuales las respuestas fueron casi idénticas. De este modo, aunque las tendencias generales en las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la importancia de la precisión al hablar estas dos lenguas metas son similares, aparentemente existen algunas diferencias, que posiblemente reflejan un estatus diferente para el inglés y el francés o quizás distintas experiencias en el aprendizaje de las dos lenguas y sugieren que estos estudiantes no necesariamente creen en un criterio universal para un “buen” aprendizaje de lenguas.

5.2 La dificultad para aprender inglés y francés

Una segunda categoría muy importante de creencias que emergió del análisis factorial es la creencia de los estudiantes sobre la dificultad para aprender inglés y francés. Primero, sorprendentemente, la abrumadora mayoría de los estudiantes encuestados (96%) creen en el concepto de jerarquía en la dificultad del aprendizaje de una lengua. Dado que casi todos estos estudiantes han estudiado al menos dos lenguas extranjeras, principalmente inglés y francés, este descubrimiento es particularmente interesante porque indica que estos estudiantes

poseen fuertes creencias acerca de la relativa dificultad de aprender estas dos lenguas extranjeras. En efecto, las respuestas de los estudiantes a los dos reactivos relacionados con las creencias de los estudiantes sobre la dificultad para aprender inglés y francés, respectivamente, soportan esta interpretación. Cuando se les pidió estimar el grado de dificultad de aprender inglés, únicamente el 1% de los estudiantes encuestados categorizó al inglés como una lengua difícil, mientras que el 61% posicionó al francés como una lengua difícil o muy difícil. Además, el 66% de los estudiantes categorizó al inglés como una lengua fácil o muy fácil, en contraste con únicamente el 10% que posicionaron al francés como una lengua fácil o muy fácil. Concordando con estos resultados, cuando se les preguntó cómo calificarían la relativa dificultad para aprender árabe, inglés y francés, el 74% de los estudiantes posicionaron al inglés como el lenguaje más fácil en comparación al árabe y el francés y únicamente el 3% lo calificó como el más difícil, como se muestra en la tabla 3. Por otra parte, únicamente el 6% de los participantes calificaron al francés como el lenguaje más fácil entre los tres y el 32% lo calificó como el más difícil.

De esta forma, los estudiantes encuestados en este estudio ven al inglés como un lenguaje fácil o muy fácil y al francés como muy difícil, un descubrimiento que está relacionado con la creencia popular en Líbano de que aprender francés, una lengua “difícil”, a una edad temprana, y después aprender inglés como tercera lengua probablemente garantizará un dominio en ambas lenguas, mientras que el aprender inglés, una lengua “fácil”, a una edad temprana y después aprender

Tabla 3
Frecuencia de respuestas (en %): dificultad para aprender diferentes lenguas en Líbano

Reactivo	1	2	3	4 ^a
43. ¿Crees que es más fácil aprender francés antes de aprender inglés o aprender inglés antes que aprender francés?	8	81	8	3
44. En tu opinión ¿Cómo se comparan el árabe, inglés y francés con respecto a su grado de dificultad?	Árabe (64) Francés (32) Inglés (3)	Francés (61) Inglés (22) Árabe (16)	Inglés (74) Árabe (19) Francés (6)	

Nota. La frecuencia de respuestas (en %) está redondeada al número entero más cercano y por lo tanto no puede sumar más de 100. ^a Para la pregunta 43: 1, sin diferencia; 2, más fácil aprender primero el francés; 3 más fácil aprender primero el inglés; 4, más fácil aprender ambas lenguas al mismo tiempo; para la pregunta 44: 1, la lengua más difícil; 2, lengua de mediano grado de dificultad; 3 la lengua más fácil.

francés hace más difícil el adquirir un dominio del francés. De acuerdo con esta creencia popular, la mayoría de los estudiantes encuestados (81%) están de acuerdo con el hecho de que es más fácil aprender francés antes de aprender inglés que de manera inversa, como se muestra en la tabla 3.

Si esta popular creencia acerca del aprendizaje de inglés y francés en Líbano esté o no basada en una obviedad está ciertamente abierto a discusión. Muchos defensores de la noción de que aprender francés antes que inglés es “más fácil” están a favor de la idea que este fenómeno es producto de una causa lingüística, más específicamente fonológica, basada principalmente en que es difícil obtener una pronunciación “adecuada” del francés después de aprender inglés (o que tal vez es difícil de obtener si no se aprende en la niñez). Otro argumento tal vez más convincente se refiere a la motivación de los estudiantes para aprender las dos lenguas. La mayoría de los estudiantes provenientes de una formación educativa de medio inglés generalmente no toman en cuenta con mucha seriedad sus clases de francés y consecuentemente no dedican mucho tiempo y energía para estudiar esta lengua. Por otro lado, muchos estudiantes con una formación educativa de medio francés creen que para ellos es esencial convertirse lo más competentes posible en el uso del inglés, una lengua que utilizarán por razones tanto académicas como profesionales. Por lo tanto, dado que probablemente dedican mucho tiempo y esfuerzo para aprender inglés, los estudiantes libaneses con formación educativa de medio francés pueden llegar a volverse competentes adecuadamente en inglés, mientras que muy pocos estudiantes con formación educativa de medio inglés se volverán tan competentes en francés, una situación que promueve las creencias populares que dicen que aprender francés antes que inglés en Líbano es “más fácil” o “más conveniente” y que el francés es una lengua más difícil que el inglés.

Además, como se muestra en la tabla 3, la mayoría de los estudiantes (64%) calificaron al árabe como la lengua más difícil de las tres, un descubrimiento

peculiar ya que es la lengua materna de estos estudiantes. Dos razones principales pueden ser atribuidas a este aparentemente inusual descubrimiento. Primero, es importante tener en mente que estos estudiantes han empezado a aprender inglés o francés a una edad muy temprana, y es probable que utilicen estas lenguas en distintos aspectos de su vida fuera del salón de clases; ciertamente, muchos libaneses prefieren referirse a ellos mismos más como “bilingües” en árabe e inglés o árabe y francés que como hablantes de inglés o francés como lengua extranjera. En segundo lugar, probablemente estos estudiantes han percibido al “árabe” como al Árabe Estándar Moderno, la variante formal del árabe enseñada en clases, y no el dialecto hablado en Líbano. En conjunto, estas dos razones podrían explicar este descubrimiento por desconcertante que parezca.

Finalmente, es importante mencionar que la formación educativa en ambas lenguas y el haber estado en un país de habla inglesa fueron factores destacados que influyen en las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad de aprender inglés. Como era de esperarse, los estudiantes con una formación educativa de medio francés y aquellos que nunca han estado en un país de habla inglesa fueron más propensos a estar de acuerdo con que el inglés es una lengua difícil, con sentir pena al hablar inglés con otras personas y con que es más fácil leer y escribir en inglés que hablarlo y entenderlo que aquellos con una formación educativa de medio inglés y aquellos que han vivido en un país de habla inglesa.

5.3 Motivaciones para aprender inglés y francés

Como hemos discutido antes, el dominio del inglés se ha vuelto esencial para avanzar académica y profesionalmente en Líbano y ha comenzado a tener un papel más sobresaliente que el francés, al menos para propósitos profesionales. Por lo tanto, era de esperarse que los estudiantes demostraran fuertes motivaciones instrumentales para aprender inglés. De hecho, la mayoría de los estudiantes encuestados (84%) estuvieron de acuerdo con que la gente de Líbano siente que es importante hablar inglés; sin embargo, el 79% estuvo de acuerdo con que les gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos de inglés, indicando así

mismo una motivación integral para aprender dicha lengua. Con respecto a las motivaciones para aprender francés, el 63% de los estudiantes estuvieron de acuerdo con que la gente de Líbano siente que es importante hablar francés y el 57% estuvo de acuerdo con que les gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos de francés. Por lo tanto, aunque muchos de los estudiantes parecen estar motivados para aprender francés, las respuestas totales fueron más fuertes para aprender inglés. Además, el 61% de los estudiantes estuvieron de acuerdo con que es más importante hablar inglés que francés en Líbano, apoyando la hipótesis de que el inglés se ha convertido de manera general más importante que el francés para muchos libaneses. Para abundar más en el tema de las motivaciones de los estudiantes para aprender inglés y francés en Líbano, las respuestas a los reactivos 29 y 41, que evalúan los motivos de los estudiantes para aprender inglés y francés, respectivamente, son discutidas a continuación.

Como se muestra en la tabla 4, los estudiantes encuestados mostraron fuertes motivaciones para aprender inglés y francés, no obstante, de manera similar a sus respuestas a los reactivos anteriormente discutidos, los estudiantes mostraron una motivación más fuerte por aprender inglés. Sorprendentemente, ninguno estuvo en desacuerdo con que es necesario saber inglés en Líbano, mientras que pocos estudiantes (8%) estuvieron en desacuerdo con que es necesario saber francés en Líbano. La mayoría de los estudiantes creen que es necesario saber inglés en Líbano por razones profesionales (81%) y por que es una lengua internacional (80%), mientras que un porcentaje más bajo (52%) estuvo de acuerdo con que el

Tabla 4
Frecuencia de respuestas (en %): razones para aprender inglés y francés en Líbano

Reactivos	Frecuencia de respuesta	
29. Es necesario saber inglés en Líbano (Por favor, marque el mayor numero de opciones en las que esto aplica)	(a) Por razones profesionales/profesión	81
	(b) Por razones sociales	37
	(c) Para comunicación con entidades extranjeras	67
	(d) Por que es una lengua universal/lenguaje internacional	80
	(e) No estoy de acuerdo, No creo que sea necesario saber inglés en Líbano	0

41. Es necesario saber francés en Líbano (Por favor, marque el mayor número de opciones en las que esto aplica)	(a) Por razones profesionales/profesión	52
	(b) Por razones sociales	53
	(c) Para comunicación con entidades extranjeras	55
	(d) Por que es una lengua universal/lenguaje internacional	23
	(e) No estoy de acuerdo, No creo que sea necesario saber francés en Líbano	8

francés es importante por razones profesionales en Líbano y únicamente 23% cree que el francés es una lengua internacional. La única respuesta que los estudiantes escogieron más como un motivo para aprender francés que inglés fue “razones sociales” (53% y 37%, respectivamente). De hecho, pocos estudiantes señalaron que el francés es importante por “prestigio” y “presunción,” indicando que en algunos círculos sociales, la fluidez en francés puede ser necesaria.

Además, como lo reveló el MANOVA, en esta muestra de estudiantes libaneses, las mujeres eran más propensas a expresar motivación para aprender francés y confianza para hablarlo que los hombres, contrariamente al descubrimiento de Shaaban y Ghaith (2003) de que no existían diferencias entre las actitudes lingüísticas de estudiantes hombres y mujeres hacia el árabe, inglés y francés. Finalmente, como se esperaba, la lengua empleada en el medio de formación educativa fue, de manera no sorprendente, un factor importante que influye en la motivación de los estudiantes para aprender francés. Los estudiantes libaneses con una formación educativa de medio francés fueron más propensos a expresar motivación para aprender francés y confianza para hablarlo que sus contrapartes que habían estudiado en escuelas de medio inglés. Los estudiantes con una formación educativa de medio francés que han iniciado a aprender francés a una edad muy temprana y que lo han estudiado por lo menos durante 10 años, son más propensos a sentir menos pena hablando francés que aquellos estudiantes con una formación educativa de medio inglés que generalmente han comenzado a aprender francés alrededor de los 12 años y lo han estudiado aproximadamente por 4 años. Además de esto, el primer grupo es más propenso a disfrutar el practicar francés con hablantes nativos por las mismas razones, ya que evidentemente no sienten pena ni están cohibidos al hablar esta lengua, mientras que aquellos con una formación educativa de medio inglés podrían

además no estar interesados en practicar francés en lo absoluto, ya que probablemente no estén motivados ni instrumental ni integralmente para mejorar sus habilidades lingüísticas en francés.

6. Conclusiones

Con base en los resultados se puede llegar a tres conclusiones principales. Primero, los estudiantes libaneses revelaron en este estudio una variedad de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de inglés y francés, muchas de las cuales parecen estar relacionadas con el contexto político y sociocultural de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Líbano. Notablemente, las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad de aprender una lengua y sus motivaciones para aprender inglés y francés parecen estar especialmente contextualizadas en la situación específica del aprendizaje de lenguas en Líbano. Por lo tanto, los resultados de este estudio, el primero en investigar las creencias de estudiantes libaneses acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas y uno de los primeros en examinar las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes de habla árabe en general, apoyan la opinión general de que los estudiantes de lenguas de distintos antecedentes culturales poseen diversas creencias sobre el aprendizaje de lenguas (Horwitz, 1987^a, 1988; Kunt, 1997; Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995; Yang, 1992).

Además, diferencias significativas en las creencias de los estudiantes libaneses se encontraron relacionadas con variables como género y lenguaje empleado durante la formación educativa. Por lo tanto, siguiendo la misma línea de los resultados generales sobre la importancia de las variables de antecedentes y diferencias individuales en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua (Oxford and Ehrman, 1993; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989), los resultados del presente estudio apoyan la opinión de que las variables de antecedentes pueden ser importantes fuentes de variaciones en las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas dentro del grupo (Horwitz, 1999) y sugieren que dichas variables pueden ser tomadas en cuenta en estudios de investigación que examinen las creencias de los estudiantes sobre el aprendizaje de lenguas.

Finalmente, el presente estudio fue el primer intento de investigación para comparar creencias de estudiantes sobre el aprendizaje de distintas lenguas meta, a saber de inglés y francés. El análisis factorial de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje de inglés y creencias sobre el aprendizaje de francés revelaron algunas discrepancias en los factores obtenidos; mientras dos pares de factores fueron claramente paralelos para las dos colecciones de datos, los factores restantes fueron diferentes para los datos de inglés y francés. Análisis descriptivos también revelaron algunas diferencias sobresalientes en las creencias de los estudiantes sobre el aprendizaje de ambas lenguas. Por lo tanto, obviamente hay posibilidades de variaciones en grupos particulares de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de diferentes lenguas metas, un área de investigación que no ha sido tratada previamente en la literatura y que puede complementar la investigación existente y puede probar ser fructífera para investigaciones futuras sobre este tema.

Agradecimientos

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Apéndice A. Análisis Factorial: Creencias sobre el aprendizaje de inglés

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Reactivo22	.837			
Reactivo27	.819			
Reactivo25		.745		
Reactivo28		.698		
Reactivo18		-.563		-.390
Reactivo19			.717	
Reactivo23	.444		-.538	
Reactivo21			.530	
Reactivo26			.437	
Reactivo20		.321	.385	
Reactivo42				.766
Reactivo24				.690

Reactivos	1 MD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 MA	M	DE	Tendencia
<i>Factor 1: Motivación integral para aprender inglés</i>								
22. Disfruto hablando inglés con los hablantes nativos que me encuentro.	0	5	11	50	32	4.10	0.80	.837
27. Me gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos de inglés.	1	4	15	57	22	3.96	0.79	.819
<i>Factor 2: La dificultad para hablar y aprender inglés</i>								
25. Me da pena hablar inglés con otras personas.	25	33	22	17	3	2.39	1.11	.745
28. Es más fácil leer y escribir en inglés que hablarlo y entenderlo.	9	37	19	25	10	2.91	1.16	.698
18. El inglés es: (1) una lengua muy difícil, (2) Una lengua difícil, (3) Una lengua de mediano grado de dificultad, (4) Una lengua fácil, (5) una lengua muy fácil.	0	1	32	51	15	3.80	0.70	-.563
<i>Factor 3: La importancia de la precisión al hablar inglés</i>								
19. Es importante hablar inglés con una excelente pronunciación.	1	12	14	49	24	3.82	0.97	.717

Reactivos	1 MD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 MA	M	DE	Tendencia
23. Está bien el adivinar el significado de una palabra en inglés si no la conoces.	1	11	16	62	10	3.69	0.83	-.538
21. Es necesario saber acerca de las culturas de habla inglesa para poder hablar inglés.	8	41	31	20	1	2.64	0.90	.530
26. Si se le permite a los estudiantes principiantes cometer errores, les será difícil hablar inglés correctamente más adelante.	14	36	17	25	8	2.77	1.20	.437
20. Las mujeres libanesas son mejores para aprender inglés que los hombres libaneses.	14	32	39	11	4	2.58	1.00	.385
<i>Factor 4: La importancia del inglés en Líbano</i>								
24. La gente de Líbano siente que es importante hablar inglés.	1	3	12	53	31	4.13	0.75	.766
42. En Líbano es más importante hablar inglés que francés.	2	12	24	39	22	3.69	1.01	.690

Nota. Los porcentajes han sido redondeados al número entero más cercano y por lo tanto no pueden sumar más de 100. 1, muy en desacuerdo; 2, en desacuerdo; 3, neutral; 4, de acuerdo; 5, muy de acuerdo. DE: desviación estándar; M: media.

Apéndice B. Análisis factorial: creencias sobre el aprendizaje de francés

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Reactivo39	.798			
Reactivo34	.793			
Reactivo37	-.655			
Reactivo30	.610			
Reactivo33		.703		
Reactivo32		.630		
Reactivo40		.566		
Reactivo31		.411		.400
Reactivo36			.826	
Reactivo42			-.694	
Reactivo35				-.750
Reactivo38				.577

Reactivos	1 MD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 MA	M	DE	Tendencia
<i>Factor 1: Motivación/confianza para hablar francés</i>								
39. Me gustaría llegar a conocer hablantes nativos de francés.	4	11	24	41	16	3.58	1.02	.798
34. Disfruto practicando francés con los hablantes nativos de francés que me encuentro.	6	16	17	41	16	3.48	1.13	.793
37. Siento pena al hablar francés con otras personas.	21	28	19	22	7	2.66	1.25	-.655
30. El francés es: (1) Una lengua muy difícil, (2) Una lengua difícil, (3) Una lengua de mediano grado de dificultad, (4) Una lengua fácil, (5) Una lengua muy fácil.	20	41	28	8	2	2.28	0.94	.610
<i>Factor 2: La naturaleza del aprendizaje del francés</i>								
33. Es necesario saber acerca de las culturas de habla francesa para poder hablar francés.	5	36	34	19	2	2.76	0.91	.703
32. Las mujeres libanesas son mejores para aprender inglés que los hombres libaneses.	9	21	35	24	9	3.03	1.08	.630
40. Es más fácil leer y escribir en francés que hablarlo y entenderlo.	13	33	23	23	4	2.70	1.09	.566
31. Es importante hablar francés con una excelente pronunciación.	1	10	17	46	23	3.82	0.95	.411
<i>Factor 3: La importancia del francés en Líbano</i>								
36. La gente de Líbano siente que es importante hablar francés.	2	12	22	48	15	3.64	0.94	.826
42. En Líbano es más importante hablar inglés que francés.	2	12	24	39	22	3.69	1.01	-.694
<i>Factor 4: La importancia de la precisión al hablar francés</i>								
35. Está bien el adivinar el significado de una palabra en francés si no la conoces.	2	14	20	53	7	3.51	0.89	-.750
38. Si se le permite a los estudiantes principiantes cometer errores, les será difícil hablar francés correctamente más adelante.	10	29	22	28	8	2.95	1.15	.577
31. Es importante hablar francés con una excelente pronunciación.	1	10	17	46	23	3.82	0.95	.400

Nota. Los porcentajes han sido redondeados al número entero más cercano y por lo tanto no pueden sumar más de 100. 1, muy en desacuerdo; 2, en desacuerdo; 3, neutral; 4, de acuerdo; 5, muy de acuerdo. DE: desviación estándar; M: media.

Apéndice C. Resultados del ANOVA: Influencia de variables de antecedentes – creencias sobre el aprendizaje de inglés

Fuentes de variación	Suma de cuadrados	df	Media cuadrática	F	P
<i>1. Análisis de la varianza por lengua utilizada en la formación educativa para el factor 2: “la dificultad de hablar y aprender inglés”</i>					
Entre grupos	4.506	1	4.506	4.627	.032
Dentro de grupos	234.686	241	.974		
Total	239.192	242			
<i>2. Análisis de la varianza por experiencia de visitar y vivir en un país de habla inglesa para el factor 2: “la dificultad de hablar y aprender inglés”</i>					
Entre grupos	16.382	2	8.191	8.652	.000
Dentro de grupos	255.618	270	.947		
Total	272.000	272			

Nota. df: grado de libertad (degree of freedom); F: frecuencia; P: probabilidad.

Apéndice D. Resultados del ANOVA: Influencia de variables de antecedentes – creencias sobre el aprendizaje de francés

Fuentes de variación	Suma de cuadrados	df	Media cuadrática	F	P
<i>1. Análisis de la varianza por lengua utilizada en la formación educativa para el factor 2: “motivación/confianza para hablar francés”</i>					
Entre grupos	62.946	1	62.946	84.710	.000
Dentro de grupos	171.652	231	.743		
Total	234.598	232			
<i>2. Análisis de la varianza por género para el factor 1: “motivación/confianza para hablar francés”</i>					
Entre grupos	10.020	1	10.020	10.378	.001
Dentro de grupos	252.980	262	.966		
Total	263.000	263			

Nota. df: grado de libertad (degree of freedom); F: frecuencia; P: probabilidad.

Analysis

In order to understand the complexity of the process of translation a deep analysis has to be done. According to the Webster dictionary (2009) an analysis is an abstract separation of a whole into its parts for study. This process is carried out in every field of study with the objective of obtaining the essence of that specific subject. In translations that essence is represented by the techniques and strategies employed to get the final text because they show the whole process in which the source text turns little by little into another maintaining the same message.

By a proper analysis we can observe the richness of both languages and also how they share the same beauty even when they differ in structure and form.

As was mentioned before, this translation project was carried out within the guidelines of free translation. That model permitted the use of techniques such as borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, addition, and omission.

The following is a meticulous analysis that aims to demonstrate the use of those different translation techniques and strategies employed in the translation process of the study 'University Students' Beliefs about Learning English and French in Lebanon' (2005). This analysis is presented through the use of comparative charts which contain the most representative examples of each technique showing the same phrase or word in both languages.

Borrowing

Proposed by Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1958), borrowing is a translation technique that introduces particularities of the source language culture into the target text. It is used as a matter of style when the employment of the word in its original language is more suitable to be used in the culture or context of the target text.

Throughout the whole translation examples of this technique are present in the following sentences:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
Factor scores obtained from the factor analyses were used as the dependent variables in the MANOVA .	Los puntajes de factores obtenidos del análisis factorial fueron utilizados como las variables dependientes en el MANOVA. Page 24, Line 20.
A comparison of the results of this study to those found in other BALLI studies	Una comparación de los resultados de este estudio con aquellos obtenidos en otros estudios de BALLI Page 24, Line 22.
Varimax rotation was then used...	Seguidamente la rotación Varimax fue utilizada... Page 25, Line 7.
Post hoc analyses...	Análisis post hoc ... Page 28, Line 26.

During the process of translation several studies and analyses in Spanish were consulted. It was observed in all those papers that the names of all studies and analyses remained in the original language of their creators. Since the bibliography studied showed a generalized use of these terms, the decision of maintaining the style of these kinds of studies in this translation was made.

By keeping these terms it would be probably easy to compare this translated study with some others of the same field or even with those which handle the same kind of terminology.

It is important to mention that in the text the Spanish equivalence of these terms is also mentioned but not used in all cases. Due to its generalized use in studies and statistic analysis in Spanish, these terms are probably more suitable to be employed in the Spanish analytic field, and that makes them more understandable.

In summary, the maintenance of all these English terms is a matter of style and also addresses the common and generalized use of such words in other papers of the same field.

Calque

This technique is a kind of borrowing which consists in the literal translation of the elements of an expression to place them into another language (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958).

These are some examples extracted of the translation:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
American University of Beirut (AUB)	Universidad Americana de Beirut (AUB) Page 22, Line 25.
Lebanese American University (LAU)	Universidad Libanesa Americana (LAU) Page 22, Line 26.
University of Balamand (UOB)	Universidad de Balamand (UOB) Page 22, Line 26.

The previous phrases are very simple examples of the use of calque. In all of them a literal translation for every element was needed, and in order to make the target phrase more understandable the word order was changed.

The decision of maintaining the original acronyms was made because they stand for original names and also because they represent the way in which those universities are known.

Literal Translation

Following the definition given by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) we can define literal translation as the one which consists in the transference of a message from one language into another following a syntactic regularization, which means that the translation follows very closely the form of the source language.

The following are examples of literal translation taken from the article.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
<p>This study explored the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese English as a Foreign Language university students, compared their beliefs about learning different target languages, namely, English and French...</p>	<p>Este estudio exploró las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes universitarios libaneses de inglés como lengua extranjera, comparó sus creencias acerca de aprender diferentes lenguas meta, a saber, inglés y francés...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16, Line 8.</p>
<p>Notably, the students' beliefs about the difficulty of language learning and their motivations for learning English and French seem to be especially contextualized in the Lebanese language learning situation.</p>	<p>Notablemente, las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de la dificultad del aprendizaje de lenguas y sus motivaciones para aprender inglés y francés parecen estar especialmente contextualizadas en la situación de aprendizaje de lenguas en Líbano.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36, Line 6.</p>

In these previous examples we can observe a word for word translation in which the structures of the sentences were not changed in the target language because they fit properly with the structure of sentences in the source text.

These are very simple examples of literal translation because they show how the first meaning of a word can be equivalent to form another sentence in a specific target language without using another technique.

The following three examples present a variation of literal translation.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
This study explored the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese English as a Foreign Language university students...	Este estudio exploró las creencias acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas de estudiantes universitarios libaneses de inglés como lengua extranjera... Page 16, Line 8.
After the Lebanese independence in 1943, Arabic became the only official language in Lebanon...	Después de la independencia libanesa en 1943, el árabe se convirtió en la única lengua oficial en el Líbano... Page 20, Line 10.
The questionnaire used in this study consists of a modified version of the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory...	El cuestionario usado en este estudio consiste en una versión modificada del Inventario de Creencias Sobre el Aprendizaje de Idiomas... Page 23, Line 5.

These are examples that show how literal translation is flexible to the grammar rules of English and Spanish. Since adjectives are placed in a different

position in both languages, it was necessary to modify the word order. However, the translation of those sentences maintained the character of a literal translation.

Even when there are changes in the order of the elements in a sentence it can be considered a literal translation. In this last example we can observe how this technique allows changes in the structure of sentences.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
<p>A modified version of Horwitz’s “Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory” was administered...</p>	<p>Se administró una versión modificada del “Inventario de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de idiomas” (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) de Horwitz</p> <p>Page 16, Line 11.</p>

In Spanish the subject of a sentence can be placed either at the beginning or at the end. However, in English the subject goes always at the beginning. That means that while translating into Spanish, the translator can make different decisions considering style and understandability. For the translation of this sentence the subject placement was changed just in order to make the sentence more understandable and also to make it sound more natural.

Transposition

The transposition technique gives a stylistic touch to the target text and is present in a translation when a phrase shows changes of word classes (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1985).

Throughout the text, there were different occurrences of grammatical changes, and these are some examples:

- Changing a gerund noun phrase into an infinitive noun phrase

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
According to Horwitz (1987a), studying learner beliefs about language learning is important not only because...	De acuerdo con Horwitz (1987a), el estudiar las creencias de los estudiantes acerca del aprendizaje de lenguas es importante no sólo porque... Page 17, Line 26.
Indeed, being either “French-educated” or “English-educated” is a salient identity marker in Lebanon.	De Hecho, el ser educado en francés o inglés es una marca sobresaliente de identidad en Líbano. Page 21, Line 29.

In the source text the subjects of the sentences are gerunds but when they were translated into Spanish it was necessary to turn them into sentences whose subjects are represented by an infinitive. Even when all of them are noun phrases they changed their main characteristics and have variants in their grammatical

categories. If the word categories had been respected the translation of the sentence would have resulted odd and without sense.

- Adverbial phrase and prepositional phrases

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
However, these decrees were mostly a hasty expression of national pride	Sin embargo estos decretos fueron en su mayoría expresiones precipitadas de orgullo nacionalista Page 20, Line 17.

In these two sentences we can observe how an adverb changes into a prepositional phrase. It is important to mention that they both have the same adverbial function; that means that the significant grammatical change is only in the nucleus of the phrase which changes from an adverb into a preposition.

- Changing a verb phrase into a noun phrase

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
these decrees were mostly a hasty expression of national pride and did not result from careful planning...	estos decretos fueron en su mayoría una expresión precipitada de orgullo nacionalista y no el resultado de una planeación meticulosa... Page 20, Line 18.

In this previous example a verb phrase was used to express the origins of some decrees. When it was translated into Spanish the maintenance of its

grammatical category produced an odd and not natural sentence. It was necessary to look for another option that would explain the same situation and that would not change the meaning of the message at all. After analyzing different possibilities the one which resulted more suitable was the use of a noun phrase.

Modulation

When one translation results unsuitable, even when it is grammatically correct, modulation can be used in order to change the point of view of the message. This technique produces a variation only in the form of the message but not in its sense (Vinay and Darbelnet. 1958).

Here there are some examples of the use of this technique in the process of this translation.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
I enjoy practicing English with the native speakers of English I meet .	Disfruto practicar inglés con los hablantes nativos del inglés que me encuentro . Page 25, Line 15.
I feel timid speaking English with other people.	me da pena hablar inglés con otras personas. Page 38, Line 23.
English is: (1) a very difficult language, (2) a difficult lang., (3) a lang. of medium difficulty , (4) an easy lang., (5) a very easy lang.	El inglés es: (1) una lengua muy difícil, (2) una lengua difícil, (3) una lengua de mediano grado de dificultad , (4) una lengua fácil, (5) una lengua muy fácil. Page 38, Line 27.
1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree ; 4, agree; 5,	1, muy en desacuerdo; 2, en desacuerdo; 3, neutral ; 4, de acuerdo;

strongly agree.	5, muy de acuerdo. Page 39, Line 22.
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In these examples the target phrase does not correspond to the immediate translation of the source phrase but they convey the same idea. A literal translation of these phrases would have resulted in odd sentences that would be difficult to understand for the readers.

The following examples show another type of modulation in which it is necessary to specify concepts in the target text in order to avoid misconceptions.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
variables such as language-medium educational background and gender.	variables tales como el idioma empleado en la formación educativa y género... Page 16, Line 24.
...and foreign language anxiety	...y la ansiedad ante una lengua extranjera Page 17, Line 12.
Following the establishment of religious ties between various Lebanese religious communities and the West, competing missionaries established several schools	Siguiendo el establecimiento de lazos religiosos entre diversas comunidades religiosas libanesas y el oeste, misioneros de diferentes religiones fundaron varias escuelas... Page 19, Line 29.

These changes in the target text makes the phrases more specific but at the same time keep the original intention and sense of the source text.

The employment of modulation was necessary for all these examples in order to maintain the natural manner and the style of the target text and also to avoid awkwardness in the final message.

It is important to mention that there exist some other cases in which modulation is needed to change the point of view of the message (changing negative sentence into positive, changing passive for into active or the other way around) in order to provide a translation that fits better with the cultural context.

Equivalence

Equivalence consists of presenting the same idea with different stylistic and structural methods (Vinat and Darbelnet, 1958). Equivalences are already fixed and belong to a phraseological collection of idioms, clichés, proverbs, and nominal or adjectival phrases.

Based on this definition we can present this as an example of equivalence where a common expression in English has a completely different equivalence in Spanish but still maintains its meaning.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
The participants in this study were 284 Lebanese undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses...	Los participantes en este estudio fueron 284 universitarios libaneses inscritos en cursos de inglés... Page 22, Line 25.

By observing these two phrases we can notice how different cultures have different ways to express the same thing; in other words, we can perceive how languages could be equivalent even when they do not share their culture.

In this next example we can see another fixed expression which has an equivalent meaning in a different language even when it is also commonly used in its original form.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in English	Está bien el adivinar el significado de una palabra en inglés si no la conoces Page 26, Line 10.

Even when the use of the word “o.k.” is generalized in many languages a Spanish equivalent phrase was more appropriate in this case in order to give to the sentence a coherent meaning.

The following is an example of the employment of the equivalence technique which shows the use of a fixed name in a specific field of study, in this case statistics.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
however, the scree plot and considerations of interpretability suggested that...	sin embargo el gráfico de sedimentación y las consideraciones de interpretabilidad sugirieron que... Page 25, Line 4.

This is an example in which we can observe how important it is to use the equivalences of target language. These equivalences make the message more understandable because they address a generalized use of certain terminology in distinct fields. The use of literal translation when there are fixed equivalences would result in an odd and not common sentence.

Since the translated article is a technical text it does not significantly reflect idiomatic expressions that are proper of the author’s culture. Consequently, it was no necessary to look for terms from the target culture which would represent their equivalences. For that reason the use of this technique was not frequent.

Adaptation

According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), adaptation is used in those cases where the type of situation being described by the source language does not exist in the target language culture. As mentioned before, by using adaptation the translator task is to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent.

With this technique the translator has to express something in a complete different way in order to generate a significant or familiar message for the culture of the target language. In other words, a complete change of the original expression has to be made to shift and fit into another cultural environment (Fawcett, 1997).

Due to the nature of the article translated in this project it was not necessary to use adaptation. This text was written with technical and formal expressions which do not necessarily have to be adapted to fit into other cultures in order to be understood. Besides that, it was very important to follow the patterns of a literal translation in order to maintain the register and style of the text which possibly could have been disrupted by the use of some techniques as adaptation.

Addition

Translators use the addition technique in order to make the message clearer. It consists of adding more words to the target message without changing the meaning (Vazquez Ayora, 1977).

These are some examples of addition:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)	El “Inventario de creencias sobre el aprendizaje de idiomas” (BALLI, por sus siglas en inglés) Page 18, Line 1.
multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA)	Análisis Multivariado de Varianza (MANOVA, por sus siglas en inglés) Page 24, Line 18.

In the previous examples we observe an addition of information that was made in order to clarify the message. Since the original name of certain studies and instruments were maintained it was necessary to specify where those terms were taken from. For that reason, it was necessary to add the sentence “por sus siglas en inglés” in order to show their origin.

Two other examples of addition in the translation are the next ones. In these examples the addition of words was made in order to avoid ambiguity.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
Discusses the focal role of beliefs in influencing students' motivation to learn.	discute el papel central que juegan las creencias como influencia en la motivación de los estudiantes para aprender. Page 17, Line 20.
English became one of the two compulsory foreign languages in secondary schools (along with French)	el inglés (junto con el francés) se convirtió en una de las dos lenguas extranjeras enseñadas obligatoriamente en escuelas secundarias Page 20, Line 11.

The following are examples of additional information included in the target text in order to clarify the meaning of certain abbreviations used in the charts of results.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
Note. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add up to 100. 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree.	Nota. Los porcentajes han sido redondeados al número entero más cercano y por lo tanto no puede sumar más de 100. 1, muy en desacuerdo; 2, en desacuerdo; 3, neutral; 4, de acuerdo; 5, muy de acuerdo. DE: desviación estándar; M: media.

	Page 39, Line 21.
Source language	Target Language
	<p>Nota. df: grado de libertad (degree of freedom); F: frecuencia; P: probabilidad.</p> <p>Page 41, Line 14.</p>

For the interpretation of the results presented in the charts it was necessary to change the original abbreviations which labeled some categories. In order to avoid misconceptions their meanings were included in the notes.

Omission

Vazquez Ayora (1977) states that, contrary to the addition technique, omission leaves out phrases or words to avoid redundancy or to make the message clearer.

The following are some examples of this technique used in this translation.

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
English as a Foreign Language; French as a Foreign language	inglés como lengua extranjera, francés como lengua extranjera Page 16, Line 28.

As we can notice in Spanish it is possible to omit the indeterminate article “a” to make the sentence more natural.

The following is another example in which omission was used:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Target Language</i>
Indeed, being either “French-educated” or “English-educated” is a salient identity marker in Lebanon.	De Hecho, el ser educado en francés o inglés es una marca sobresaliente de identidad en Líbano. Page 21, Line 29.

This last example shows how the omission of certain words in a translation does not affect the message of the sentence. Even when one part of the compound conjunction present in the source text (either... or...) was omitted in the Spanish version the sense of discrimination between two possibilities is still there.

In this example one of the two words “educated” was omitted to place the remaining one in a position that allows a change in the style and make the Spanish sentence less redundant and more natural. With this change and omission it was possible to leave behind the use of hyphens.

Conclusions

There exists a popular belief which says that everyone who speaks a second language can be a translator. But that is not always true. Being a translator is not only a matter of languages, it is comprised of a cumulus of knowledge that works in the same way as an engine, where each piece needs the others to function properly. The thing is that most of the time translation is misconceived and is seen as a simple task.

While carrying out a translation project, Translators face a lot of problems that sometimes seem to have no solution. In those situations it is necessary to use different techniques and strategies that are acquired throughout the study of different translation theories and also by experience. That means that someone who is not well prepared or has a minimal idea of all the things that translation involves would encounter many difficulties that would not lead him to accomplish the main goal of translation; an accurate equivalence of the source text.

During the development of this translation some problems were faced. On many occasions the selection of words to translate a phrase was not the correct one and that resulted in odd sentences that were not equivalent to the original message. For that reason, it was necessary to reread the translation and the original document several times in order to compare, analyze and reformulate sentences.

The encounter with terminology related with statistics was also a very important situation that needed a deep analysis. It was necessary to research and to comprehend the way in which different statistic instruments worked, and the

decision of keeping or changing the original name of those terms was something that took a great deal of time.

Even when there were some problems that sometimes seemed to be complicated it was possible to figure out some practical solutions that at the end produced an accurate text which respected the style and the form of the author.

By working in this kind of documents which also include a complete and complex analysis of the whole process, future translators may realize the importance of the mastery of both languages in all their aspects. Only by knowing and respecting the richness and beauty of languages our translation will result into a faithful picture of what we read in a source text.

The job of a translation is sometimes tiring and challenging, but it is always rewarding and exciting. It gives you more than you can imagine because it makes you part of the process of creation of new thoughts and ideas that would probably, at certain moment of the history, improve important aspects of the society.

As a final conclusion, it would be important to bring back the concept of art. Translation follows a complex process just like music, painting, dance, and other kind of expressions, that is why it should be also respected and valued. At the end, all good artists know the same thing as translators; only with love, study, knowledge, experience, creativity, patience, and talent it is possible to produce a masterpiece.

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Appendices



University students' beliefs about learning English and French in Lebanon

Rula L. Diab

*Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, American University of Beirut,
P.O. Box 11-0236, Beirut, Lebanon*

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Abstract

This study explored the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese English as a Foreign Language university students, compared their beliefs about learning different target languages, namely, English and French, and investigated within-group variation in these students' beliefs. A modified version of Horwitz's "Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory" was administered to 284 students in three universities in Lebanon. Findings revealed that the students hold a variety of beliefs about learning English and French, many of which seem to be related to the political and socio-cultural context of foreign language education in Lebanon. Notably, the students' beliefs about the difficulty of language learning and their motivations for learning English and French seem to be especially contextualized in the Lebanese language learning situation. The students viewed English as an easy language and French as a difficult one and, consistent with a popular belief held in Lebanon, agreed that it is "easier" to learn French before learning English. In addition, most students revealed strong instrumental motivations for learning English and agreed that it is more important to learn English than French. Finally, statistically significant differences in the students' beliefs were found related to variables such as language-medium educational background and gender.

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Keywords: Beliefs about language learning; BALLI; Motivation; English as a Foreign Language; French as a Foreign language; Lebanon; Socio-political factors in language learning; Individual differences; Language-medium background

E-mail address: rd10@aub.edu.lb.

1. Introduction

Language teachers and researchers currently place much importance on the role of the learner; characteristics such as learning styles, strategies, attitudes, and motivations, to name just a few, are currently viewed as essential factors to be considered in the language learning process. One of the more recently discussed learner variables in the field is learner beliefs about language learning, which refer to opinions that learners hold about various aspects of language learning (Horwitz, 1987a). Such beliefs have been linked with other learner variables, mainly language learning strategies (Horwitz, 1987a, 1988; Park, 1995; Wenden, 1986, 1987; Yang, 1992) and foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 1988, 1989; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kunt, 1997; Oh, 1996; Truitt, 1995; Young, 1991). Certain beliefs about language learning might also affect learners' motivation to learn the target language; for example, unrealistic beliefs regarding the amount of time required to become proficient in a second language could obviously result in frustration (Cohen and Dornyei, 2002). Zimmerman and Schunk's (2001) important work on self-regulated learning also discusses the focal role of beliefs in influencing students' motivation to learn. Regarding the origin of learner beliefs, Horwitz (1987a) states that previous experiences as language learners as well as cultural background are both likely to influence and shape learners' beliefs about language learning.

According to Horwitz (1987a), studying learner beliefs about language learning is important not only because such beliefs may influence students' expectations for and commitment to their language learning, but also because such beliefs may be more susceptible to change than cognitive style variables or affective variables such as attitudes and motivation. The *Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory* (BALLI), developed by Horwitz in order to assess beliefs about language learning systematically, has been used with foreign language (FL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the US (Horwitz, 1987, 1988, 1989; Kuntz, 1996; Oh, 1996) as well as with English as a foreign language (EFL) students abroad. EFL learner groups that have been targeted in BALLI studies include Taiwanese (Yang, 1992), Korean (Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995), Chinese (Su, 1995; Wang, 1996), and Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot students (Kunt, 1997).

In spite of the growing number of studies investigating beliefs about language learning of different groups of EFL learners from various cultural backgrounds, no study has yet explored the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese EFL students, who unlike most other EFL learners examined in BALLI studies so far, have been exposed to two foreign languages in the Lebanese multilingual context: English and French; therefore, this study includes a first research attempt to compare learner beliefs about learning different target languages. In addition, the present study provides preliminary data on differences in learner beliefs due to within group factors. According to Horwitz (1999), variables such as age, gender, and stage of language learning may be important sources of within group variation in learner beliefs about language learning and therefore should be examined more closely in studies examining learner beliefs. Thus, the present study has addressed the three following research questions:

1. What are the beliefs about language learning in general, learning English, and learning French of EFL university students in Lebanon?
2. How do the beliefs about learning English of EFL university students in Lebanon compare to their beliefs about learning French?

3. Are there any statistically significant differences in beliefs among EFL university students in Lebanon related to factors such as gender, major field of study, or language-medium educational background (English vs. French)?

2. Foreign language education in Lebanon

A study investigating the beliefs about language learning of EFL university students in Lebanon must take into account the particular Lebanese foreign language learning and teaching context. The linguistic situation in Lebanon, in general, and the role and status of English, in particular, are important to discuss prior to embarking on such a study; however, a thorough discussion of these areas is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, a brief overview of foreign language education in Lebanon will be presented next. The interested reader may refer to [Diab \(2000\)](#) for a more thorough analysis of foreign language learning in the Lebanese context, including a brief historical review of foreign language education in Lebanon, an overview of the current role and status of English in the Lebanese context, and a discussion of the main political and socio-cultural factors that influence Lebanese EFL students' motivations and attitudes towards learning English.

The arrival of Western missionaries in the 18th and 19th centuries, the colonization by France right after the end of World War I until Lebanese independence in 1943, and the emergence of English as a leading international language for business, technology, and communication, all had a major influence on the learning and teaching of foreign languages, mainly English and French, in Lebanon. Following the establishment of religious ties between various Lebanese religious communities and the West, competing missionaries established several schools in the country, exposing the Lebanese to Western cultures and languages. According to [Shaaban and Ghaith \(1999\)](#), the most active of these missionaries were the French Jesuits and the American Protestants. In addition, during the period of the French mandate (1920–1943), the French language became an official language in Lebanon in addition to Arabic; French was taught in all schools and was the medium of instruction for sciences, mathematics, and social studies at all levels of education ([Shaaban and Ghaith, 1999](#)).

After the Lebanese independence in 1943, Arabic became the only official language in Lebanon; moreover, in 1946, English became one of the two compulsory foreign languages in secondary schools (along with French), and the Lebanese government's official curriculum for public schools gave equal importance to French and English. In addition, several decrees pertaining to language education were issued, most of which aimed at strengthening the role of Arabic in education and using it as a medium of instruction. However, these decrees were mostly a hasty expression of national pride and did not result from careful planning; the fact remained that French and English were "deeply rooted in the Lebanese educational system" ([Shaaban and Ghaith, 1996, p. 101](#)) and both remained dominant as media of instruction in many Lebanese schools. Economic reasons mostly contributed to this spread of foreign languages as media of instruction, especially English, which at that time was starting to become more influential than French in Lebanon, mainly because of the international influence of the United States and the growing importance of the English language in international business, science, and technology.

Indeed, according to [Shaaban and Ghaith \(1999\)](#), the traditional cultural-linguistic conflict between Arabic and foreign languages as media of instruction is now shifting towards

“full-fledged multilingualism in society as well as in education” (p. 1) and is being gradually replaced by a struggle between English and French, with English gaining ground so far, mainly because of economic and practical considerations. Along the same lines, [Constantine \(1995\)](#) argues that the importance of the French culture and language in Lebanon has been gradually weakening, mainly because of the competition from American culture. On the other hand, [Joseph \(2004\)](#), who provides an examination of Lebanese language/identity patterns, argues that, in spite of the fact that proficiency in English is currently very highly valued in Lebanon and that recent Lebanese educational policies advocate trilingualism in Arabic–English–French, Arabic–French bilingualism remains a prominent identity marker for many Lebanese, particularly Christian Lebanese. However, in a survey of the attitudes of adult residents of the Greater Beirut area towards learning English and French in Lebanon, [Ghaleb and Joseph \(2000\)](#) found that while both English and French figured as being important to the respondents, English was considered the more important of the two for those who chose only one language, even for the Christian respondents.

Thus, the general consensus today is that English is essential for all Lebanese, while French may be important for certain groups, mainly those who have been historically affiliated with the French language and culture. Indeed, the fact remains that most Lebanese students today belong to one of the two dominant types of schools: “English-medium” and “French-medium.” [Shaaban and Ghaith’s \(2003\)](#) survey of university students’ perceptions of the utility of Arabic, English, and French in Lebanon revealed that language-medium background or first foreign language studied at school (English vs. French) influences the linguistic attitudes of students in Lebanon towards these three languages. Indeed, being either “French-educated” or “English-educated” is a salient identity marker in Lebanon. For many Lebanese, studying at French-medium schools and being fluent in French is an essential part of who they are. Such individuals most probably speak French at home in addition to Arabic and place much importance on the importance and prestige of French.

Therefore, language-medium educational background may obviously play a major role influencing Lebanese students’ motivational orientations for learning English and French. In [Gardner’s \(1985\)](#) classic motivation theory, which emphasizes the socio-cultural nature of motivation in second language learning, two broad motivational orientations are discussed: integrative and instrumental. While the latter reflects a pragmatic motive for learning a second language, such as getting a better job, the former is indicative of positive attitudes towards the L2 group and the desire to become similar to members of this target language group. In the Lebanese socio-cultural language learning situation, even though instrumental reasons for learning English are currently dominant, it is expected that learners who have studied at French-medium schools are also likely to be integratively motivated to learn French. Their counterparts from an English-medium background, on the other hand, are likely to agree that it is more important to learn English than French in Lebanon and are much less likely to be integratively motivated to learn French.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 284 Lebanese undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses at the American University of Beirut (AUB), the Lebanese American University (LAU), and the University of Balamand (UOB). Fifty-seven percent of the

participants were males and 43% females, and they ranged in age from 18 to 23, with a median age of 19. Of the 284 participants, 281 stated that their native language is Arabic, while the remaining three specified Armenian as their native language. Moreover, 45% of the students have attended English-medium schools while 43% have studied at French-medium schools.

3.2. Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study consists of a modified version of the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI, ESL/EFL version, Horwitz, 1987b) and a background questionnaire designed by the researcher in order to obtain background information about the students, such as their age, gender, medium of instruction educational background, major field of study, and experience visiting or living in an English-speaking country.

According to Horwitz (1999), even though a wide variety of cultural groups contributed to its development, the BALLI aims at eliciting “commonly held beliefs,” and during its development, idiosyncratic items were eliminated from the inventory. Therefore, she recommends that research studies on beliefs of a certain cultural group consider identifying and perhaps adding beliefs specific to the target population. Similarly, Benson and Lor (1999) argue that beliefs about learning should not be viewed independently of context, and Sakui and Gaies (1999) outlined the need for the development of “context-sensitive” instruments for measuring beliefs and developed a scale addressing beliefs relevant to the learning of English in Japan.

Therefore, an effort was made in this study to add beliefs about language learning that are particular to the Lebanese context. A pilot study consisting of interviews with 20 Lebanese EFL university students was conducted in order to elicit any beliefs about language learning that might be unique to the target population and that may therefore be added to the BALLI items. Based on the results, several modifications were made to the original 34-item BALLI scale, most importantly the addition of several context-specific items and the division of the scale into four sections: (1) beliefs about foreign language learning in general (17 items), (2) beliefs about learning English (12 items), (3) beliefs about learning French (12 items; identical to Section 2 except the items address French), and (4) beliefs about the learning of different languages in Lebanon, namely English, French, and Arabic (four context-specific items addressing the students’ beliefs about the relative importance and the relative difficulty of learning Arabic, English, and French in Lebanon).

4. Results

Because the BALLI measures various beliefs about language learning, it does not yield a single composite score; responses to the individual items are considered separately (Horwitz, 1987a). Therefore, principal-component and factor analyses were conducted in order to obtain estimates of the initial components and to determine the underlying factors that represent the data. Results of these factor analyses are presented next, followed by findings from the multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) conducted to test the influence of background variables on the students’ beliefs about language learning. Factor scores obtained from the factor analyses were used as the dependent variables in the MANOVA. A comparison of the results of this study to those found in other BALLI studies of different EFL learner groups is beyond the scope of this paper and is presented in Diab (2004), which compares the beliefs of Lebanese university students in this study to those of Tai-

wanese (Yang, 1992), Korean (Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995), Chinese (Su, 1995; Wang, 1996), and Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot (Kunt, 1997) EFL learners.

4.1. Factor analyses: beliefs about learning English

According to the principal-component analysis, five factors accounted for the variance of scores in the “beliefs about learning English” data; however, the scree plot and considerations of interpretability suggested that a four-factor solution was most appropriate. The four extracted factors accounted for 50.2% of the total variance. Varimax rotation was then used to make the factors more interpretable. Table 1 presents a summary of the results of the factor analysis of the “beliefs about learning English” data. The factor loadings of each item in this section on the four rotated factors and the frequencies of response (in percentage), means, and standard deviations of the items that loaded .40 or greater on each factor are provided in Appendix A.

The first factor obtained high loadings from the following two items: “I enjoy practicing English with the native speakers of English I meet” and “I would like to get to know native speakers of English;” therefore, it seems to represent a dimension reflecting students’ confidence in speaking English with native speakers and perhaps more generally their integrative motivation for learning and speaking English. The second factor obtained high loadings from items such as “I feel timid speaking English with other people” and “It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it”. At the same time, students’ general expectation about the difficulty of learning English also loaded highly but in a negative direction on this factor; therefore, this factor seems to represent a dimension reflecting students’ beliefs about the difficulty as opposed to the ease of learning and speaking English.

The third factor loaded highly on items such as: “It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation,” “If beginning students are permitted to make errors in French, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on,” and “It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English.” An item that loaded negatively on this factor is “It’s ok to guess if you don’t know a word in English.” Thus, this factor seems to generally represent a dimension reflecting students’ beliefs about the importance of accuracy and correctness in learning and speaking English. Finally, the two items that loaded highly on the fourth factor are “Lebanese people feel that it is important to speak English” and “It is more important to speak English than French in Lebanon.” Thus, this factor obviously reflects a dimension representing the students’ beliefs about the importance of speaking English in Lebanon.

4.2. Factor analyses: beliefs about learning French

Based on the principal-component analysis, a four-factor solution was obtained for the scores in the “beliefs about learning French” data. The four extracted factors accounted

Table 1
Factor analysis: beliefs about learning English

Factor	Description	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	Integrative motivation for learning English	1.717	14.306	14.306
2	The difficulty of speaking and learning English	1.662	13.846	28.152
3	The importance of accuracy in speaking English	1.389	11.579	39.730
4	The importance of English in Lebanon	1.257	10.474	50.204

for 51.1% of the total variance. Varimax rotation was then used to make the factors more interpretable. Table 2 presents a summary of the results of the factor analysis of the “beliefs about learning French” data. The factor loadings of each item in this section on the four rotated factors and the frequencies of response (in percentage), means, and standard deviations of the items that loaded .40 or greater on each factor are provided in Appendix B.

The first factor obtained high loadings from items such as “I would like to get to know native speakers of French” and “I enjoy practicing French with the native speakers of French I meet.” An item that loaded negatively on this factor is “I feel timid speaking French with other people.” In addition, students’ general expectation about the difficulty of learning French also loaded highly on this factor. Thus, the first factor seems to represent a dimension reflecting students’ motivation for learning French and their confidence in learning and speaking this language. The second factor obtained high loadings from items such as “It is necessary to know about French-speaking cultures in order to speak French,” “It is easier to read and write French than to speak and understand it,” and “It is important to speak French with an excellent pronunciation.” Thus, this factor seems to generally represent a dimension reflecting students’ beliefs about the nature of learning French. Students’ beliefs about the relative aptitude of men and women in learning French also loaded highly on this factor.

The item “Lebanese people feel that it is important to speak French” loaded highly in a positive direction on the third factor, while the item “It is more important to speak English than French in Lebanon” loaded highly but in a negative direction. Thus, this factor, which parallels the fourth factor found for the beliefs about learning English data, “the importance of English in Lebanon,” obviously reflects a dimension representing the students’ beliefs about the importance of speaking French in Lebanon. Finally, the item “It’s ok to guess if you don’t know a word in French” loaded highly but in a negative direction on the fourth factor, while the item “If beginning students are permitted to make errors in French, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on” loaded highly but in a positive direction. In addition, the item “It is important to speak French with an excellent pronunciation” also had a moderate positive loading on this factor. Thus, this fourth factor seems to represent students’ beliefs about the importance of accuracy and correctness in learning and speaking French.

4.3. MANOVA: influence of background variables – beliefs about learning English

Two sources of within group variation revealed by the MANOVA conducted on the factor scores of the “beliefs about learning English” data are language medium

Table 2
Factor analysis: beliefs about learning French

Factor	Description	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	Motivation/confidence in speaking French	2.339	19.492	14.492
2	The nature of learning French	1.606	13.385	32.877
3	The importance of French in Lebanon	1.128	9.398	42.275
4	The importance of accuracy in speaking French	1.053	8.775	51.051

background and experience visiting or living in an English-speaking country. First, a MANOVA conducted to test the influence of language medium background on the four factor scores was significant at $p < .05$. Post hoc ANOVAs revealed that the ANOVA for Factor 2, “the difficulty of speaking and learning English,” was significant at $p < .05$ ($F = 4.627$; means: English-medium = $-.09$; French-medium = $.18$). Moreover, a MANOVA conducted to test the influence of experience visiting or living in an English-speaking country on the factor scores obtained for this section was significant at $p < .001$. Post hoc ANOVAs revealed that again, the ANOVA for Factor 2, “the difficulty of learning and speaking English,” was significant ($F = 8.652$; $p < .001$; means: Has lived in an English-speaking country = $-.50$; Has visited an English-speaking country = $-.13$; Has never been to an English-speaking country = $.17$). Post hoc analyses (Tukey’s HSD) revealed a significant difference between students who have lived in an English-speaking country and those who have never visited one ($p < .001$). Complete source tables for the two significant ANOVAs presented in this section are displayed in [Appendix C](#).

4.4. MANOVA: influence of background variables – beliefs about learning French

Two sources of within group variation revealed by the MANOVA conducted on the factor scores in the “beliefs about learning French” data are language medium background and gender. First, a MANOVA conducted to test the influence of language medium background on the four factor scores was significant at $p < .001$. Post hoc ANOVAs revealed that the ANOVA for Factor 1: “motivation/confidence in speaking French” was significant at $p < .001$ ($F = 84.710$; means: English-medium = $-.55$; French-medium = $.49$). Secondly, a MANOVA conducted to test the influence of gender on the factor scores obtained for this section was significant at $p < .01$. Post hoc ANOVAs revealed that the ANOVA for Factor 1: “motivation/confidence in speaking French,” was significant at $p < .01$ ($F = 10.378$; means: male = $-.18$; female = $.22$). Complete source tables for the two significant ANOVAs presented in this section are displayed in [Appendix D](#).

5. Discussion

In order to provide a meaningful discussion, the results of both factor analyses and MANOVA will be discussed simultaneously, focusing on the following major categories identified in the factor analyses: The importance of accuracy in speaking English and French, the difficulty of learning English and French, and motivations towards learning English and French.

5.1. The importance of accuracy in speaking English and French

A major category of beliefs that emerged from the factor analyses is students’ beliefs about the importance of accuracy in speaking English and French. In general, the students seemed to minimize the importance of accuracy and endorsed strategies that are commonly associated with communication-based approaches to language teaching. For example, most of the students (72%) agreed that it is acceptable to guess if you do not know a word in English (60% agreed for French), and 50% disagreed that permitting beginning students to make errors in English will make it difficult for them to speak correctly later on (only 39% disagreed for French, however). On the other hand, most of the students

seemed to place great value on pronunciation, since 73% agreed that it is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation (69% agreed for French).

Notably, no matter what the trend of the responses (agreement or disagreement), the responses to the items concerning English were stronger than the ones concerning French, except for the two items addressing pronunciation, for which the responses were almost identical. Thus, although the general trends in the students' beliefs about the importance of accuracy in speaking the two target languages are similar, there seem to be some differences as well, possibly reflecting a different status for English and French or perhaps different experiences in learning the two languages, and suggesting that these students do not necessarily believe in universal criteria for "good" language learning.

5.2. The difficulty of learning English and French

A second major category of beliefs that emerged from the factor analyses is students' beliefs about the difficulty of learning English and French. First, remarkably, the overwhelming majority of the students surveyed (96%) believe in the concept of a language learning difficulty hierarchy. Since almost all of these students have studied at least two foreign languages, mainly English and French, this finding is particularly interesting because it indicates that these students hold strong beliefs about the relative difficulty of learning these two foreign languages. Indeed, the students' responses to the two items assessing the students' beliefs about the difficulty of learning English and French, respectively, support this interpretation. When asked to rate the difficulty of learning English, only 1% of the students surveyed rated it as a difficult language, while 61% rated French as a difficult or very difficult language. In addition, 66% of the students rated English as an easy or very easy language, as opposed to only 10% who rated French as an easy or very easy language. Consistent with these findings, when asked how they would rate the relative difficulty of learning Arabic, English, and French, 74% of the students rated English as the easiest language in comparison with Arabic and French, and only 3% rated it as the most difficult, as shown in Table 3. On the other hand, only 6% of the participants rated French as the easiest language of the three, and 32% rated it as the most difficult.

Thus, the students surveyed in this study view English as an easy or very easy language and French as a difficult one, a finding that is related to the popular belief in Lebanon that learning French, a "difficult" language, at an early age, and later learning English as a

Table 3
Frequencies of response (in %): difficulty of learning different languages in Lebanon

Items	1	2	3	4 ^a
43. Do you believe that it is easier to learn French before learning English or to learn English before learning French?	8	81	8	3
44. In your opinion, how do the following three languages: Arabic, English, and French compare as to difficulty to learn?	Arabic (64) French (32) English (3)	French (61) English (22) Arabic (16)	English (74) Arabic (19) French (6)	

Note. Frequencies of responses (in %) are rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add up to 100.

^a For item 43: 1, no difference; 2, easier to learn French first; 3, easier to learn English first; 4, easier to learn both languages at the same time; for item 44: 1, most difficult language; 2, language of medium difficulty; 3, least difficult language.

third language is likely to guarantee proficiency in both French and English, while learning English, an “easy” language, at an early age and later learning French makes it more difficult to become proficient in French. Consistent with this popular belief, the majority of the students surveyed (81%) agree that it is easier to learn French before learning English than the other way around, as shown in [Table 3](#).

Whether this popular belief about learning English and French in Lebanon is based on a truism is certainly open for discussion. Many proponents of the notion that learning French before English is “easier” argue for a linguistic, or more specifically phonological, cause for this phenomenon, mainly that “proper” French pronunciation is difficult to achieve after learning English (or perhaps that it is difficult to achieve if not learned as a child). Another perhaps more convincing argument concerns the students’ motivations for learning the two languages. Most students who come from an English-medium background do not generally view their French classes as very serious and consequently do not devote much time and energy to studying French. On the other hand, many students from French-medium backgrounds believe that it is essential for them to become as proficient as possible in English, a language they likely need for both academic and professional reasons. Thus, because they may devote a lot of time and effort to learning English, Lebanese students from a French-medium background may indeed become adequately proficient in English, while very few students from an English-medium background will become as proficient in French, a situation that fosters the popular beliefs that learning French before English in Lebanon is “easier” or “better” and that French is a more difficult language than English.

In addition, as shown in [Table 3](#), most students (64%) rated Arabic as the most difficult language of the three, a peculiar finding since these students’ native language is Arabic. Two main reasons can be attributed to this seemingly unusual finding. First, it is important to keep in mind that these students have started learning either English or French at a very early age, and they are likely to use these languages in several aspects of their lives outside the classroom; indeed, many Lebanese prefer to refer to themselves as “bilingual” in either Arabic and English or Arabic and French rather than speakers of English or French as a foreign language. Secondly, these students have likely perceived “Arabic” to be Modern Standard Arabic, the standard formal variety of Arabic taught in classes, and not the spoken Lebanese dialect. Taken together, these two reasons might explain this otherwise disconcerting finding.

Finally, it is important to mention that both language-medium background and having been to an English-speaking country were prominent factors influencing students’ beliefs about the difficulty of learning English. Not surprisingly, students from a French-medium background and those who have never been to an English-speaking country were more likely than those from an English-medium background and those who have lived in an English-speaking country to agree that English is a difficult language, that they feel timid speaking English with other people, and that it is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.

5.3. Motivations towards learning English and French

As discussed earlier, proficiency in English has become essential for academic and professional advancement in Lebanon and has started to play a more prominent role than French, at least for professional purposes. Therefore, it was expected that the students would reveal strong instrumental motivations for learning English. Indeed, the majority

of the students surveyed (84%) agreed that Lebanese people feel that it is important to speak English; however, 79% agreed that they would like to get to know native speakers of English, indicating an integrative motivation for learning the language as well. Concerning motivations for learning French, 63% of the students agreed that Lebanese people feel it is important to speak French, and 57% agreed that they would like to get to know native speakers of French. Thus, although many of the students appear to be motivated to learn French, the responses, overall, were stronger for learning English. Moreover, 61% of the students agreed that it is more important to speak English than French in Lebanon, supporting the hypothesis that English has generally become more important than French for many Lebanese. To shed further light on the students' motivations towards learning English and French in Lebanon, responses to items 29 and 41, which assess the students' motives for learning English and French, respectively, are discussed next.

As shown in Table 4, the students surveyed revealed strong motivations for learning both English and French, albeit, similarly to their responses to the items discussed above, the students expressed a stronger motivation for learning English. Remarkably, no one disagreed that it is necessary to know English in Lebanon, while a few students (8%) disagreed that French is necessary to know in Lebanon. The majority of the students believe that it is necessary to know English in Lebanon for professional reasons (81%) and because it is an international language (80%), while a lower percentage (52%) agreed that French is necessary for professional reasons in Lebanon and only 23% believe that French is an international language. The only response more students chose as a motive for learning French than for learning English was "social reasons" (53% and 37%, respectively). Indeed, a few students pointed out that French is important for "prestige" and "showing off," indicating that in some social circles, fluency in French may be necessary.

Moreover, as revealed by the MANOVA, in this sample of Lebanese students, female students were more likely to express motivation to learn French and confidence in speaking it than male students, contrary to Shaaban and Ghaith's (2003) finding that no differences exist between male and female students' linguistic attitudes towards Arabic, English, and French. Finally, as expected, language-medium background was, not surprisingly, a prominent factor influencing students' motivations for learning French. Lebanese students from a French-medium background were more likely to express motivation to learn French and confidence in speaking it than their counterparts who have studied at

Table 4
Frequencies of response (in %): reasons for learning English and French in Lebanon

ITEMS	Frequencies of response	
29. It is necessary to know English in Lebanon (please check as many as apply)	(a) For career/professional reasons	81
	(b) For social reasons	37
	(c) For communication with foreign entities	67
	(d) Because it is a universal/international language	80
	(e) I disagree. I do not believe that it is necessary to know English in Lebanon	0
41. It is necessary to know French in Lebanon (please check as many as apply)	(a) For career/professional reasons	52
	(b) For social reasons	53
	(c) For communication with foreign entities	55
	(d) Because it is a universal/international language	23
	(e) I disagree. I do not believe that it is necessary to know French in Lebanon	8

English-medium schools. Students from a French-medium background who have started learning French at a very early age and have been studying it for at least ten years, are likely to feel less timid speaking French than students from an English-medium background who have generally started learning French around age 12 and have studied it for about four years. In addition, the former group are also more likely to enjoy practicing French with native speakers for the same reasons, especially since they are evidently not timid or self-conscious in speaking the language, while those from an English-medium background might not only be timid in speaking French but might also not be interested in practicing French at all, since they are not likely to be either integratively nor instrumentally motivated to improve their language skills in French.

6. Conclusions

Three main conclusions can be made based on the findings. First, the Lebanese students in this study revealed a variety of beliefs about learning English and French, many of which seem to be related to the political and socio-cultural context of foreign language education in Lebanon. Notably, the students' beliefs about the difficulty of language learning and their motivations for learning English and French seem to be especially contextualized in the specific Lebanese language learning situation. Thus, the findings of this study, the first one to investigate Lebanese students' beliefs about language learning and one of the first to examine the beliefs about language learning of Arabic-speaking students in general, support the general contention that language learners from different cultural backgrounds have various beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1987a, 1988; Kunt, 1997; Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995; Yang, 1992).

Moreover, significant differences in the Lebanese students' beliefs were found related to variables such as gender and language-medium background. Thus, in line with the general findings on the importance of background variables and individual differences in second language learning (Oxford and Ehrman, 1993; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989), the findings of the present study support the contention that background variables may be important sources of within group variation in learner beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1999) and suggest that such variables be taken into account in research studies examining learner beliefs about language learning.

Finally, the present study was the first research attempt to compare learner beliefs about learning different target languages, namely English and French. Factor analyses of the beliefs about learning English and beliefs about learning French revealed some discrepancies in the factors obtained; while two pairs of factors were clearly parallel for the two data sets, the remaining factors were different for the English and French data. Descriptive analyses also revealed some salient differences in the students' beliefs about learning the two languages. Thus, there are obviously possibilities for variation in a particular group's beliefs about learning different target languages, an area of research not previously addressed in the literature and one that may supplement existing research and may prove to be fruitful for future research studies on this topic.

Acknowledgment

This paper is based on work conducted for my dissertation, supervised by Professor Elaine K. Horwitz.

Appendix A. Factor analyses: beliefs about learning English

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
ITEM22	.837			
ITEM27	.819			
ITEM25		.745		
ITEM28		.698		
ITEM18		-.563		-.390
ITEM19			.717	
ITEM23	.444		-.538	
ITEM21			.530	
ITEM26			.437	
ITEM20		.321	.385	
ITEM42				.766
ITEM24				.690

Items	1 SD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 SA	M	SD	Loading
<i>Factor 1: integrative motivation for learning English</i>								
22. I enjoy practicing English with the native speakers of English I meet	0	5	11	50	32	4.10	0.80	.837
27. I would like to get to know native speakers of English	1	4	15	57	22	3.96	0.79	.819
<i>Factor 2: the difficulty of speaking and learning English</i>								
25. I feel timid speaking English with other people	25	33	22	17	3	2.39	1.11	.745
28. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it	9	37	19	25	10	2.91	1.16	.698
18. English is: (1) a very difficult language, (2) a difficult lang., (3) a lang. of medium difficulty, (4) an easy lang., (5) a very easy lang.	0	1	32	51	15	3.80	0.70	-.563
<i>Factor 3: the importance of accuracy in speaking English</i>								
19. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation	1	12	14	49	24	3.82	0.97	.717

Items	1 SD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 SA	M	SD	Loading
23. It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in English	1	11	16	62	10	3.69	0.83	-.538
21. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English	8	41	31	20	1	2.64	0.90	.530
26. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on	14	36	17	25	8	2.77	1.20	.437
20. Lebanese females are better than Lebanese males at learning English	14	32	39	11	4	2.58	1.00	.385
<i>Factor 4: the importance of English in Lebanon</i>								
24. Lebanese people feel that it is important to speak English	1	3	12	53	31	4.13	0.75	.766
42. It is more important to speak English than French in Lebanon	2	12	24	39	22	3.69	1.01	.690

Note. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add up to 100. 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree.

Appendix B. Factor analyses: beliefs about learning French

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
ITEM39	.798			
ITEM34	.793			
ITEM37	-.655			
ITEM30	.610			
ITEM33		.703		
ITEM32		.630		
ITEM40		.566		
ITEM31		.411		.400
ITEM36			.826	
ITEM42			-.694	
ITEM35				-.750
ITEM38				.577

Items	1	SD	2	D	3	N	4	A	5	SA	M	SD	Loading
<i>Factor 1: motivation/confidence in speaking French</i>													
39. I would like to get to know native speakers of French	4		11		24		41		16		3.58	1.02	.798
34. I enjoy practicing French with the native speakers of French I meet	6		16		17		41		16		3.48	1.13	.793
37. I feel timid speaking French with other people	21		28		19		22		7		2.66	1.25	-.655
30. French is: (1) a very difficult language, (2) a difficult lang., (3) a lang. of medium difficulty, (4) an easy lang., (5) a very easy lang.	20		41		28		8		2		2.28	0.94	.610
<i>Factor 2: the nature of learning French</i>													
33. It is necessary to know about French-speaking cultures in order to speak French	5		36		34		19		2		2.76	0.91	.703
32. Lebanese females are better than Lebanese males at learning French	9		21		35		24		9		3.03	1.08	.630
40. It is easier to read and write French than to speak and understand it.	13		33		23		23		4		2.70	1.09	.566
31. It is important to speak French with an excellent pronunciation	1		10		17		46		23		3.82	0.95	.411
<i>Factor 3: the importance of French in Lebanon</i>													
36. Lebanese people feel that it is important to speak French	2		12		22		48		15		3.64	0.94	.826
42. It is more important to speak English than French in Lebanon	2		12		24		39		22		3.69	1.01	-.694
<i>Factor 4: the importance of accuracy in speaking French</i>													
35. It is o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in French	2		14		20		53		7		3.51	0.89	-.750
38. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in French, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on	10		29		22		28		8		2.95	1.15	.577
31. It is important to speak French with an excellent pronunciation	1		10		17		46		23		3.82	0.95	.400

Note. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add up to 100. 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree.

Appendix C. ANOVA results: influence of background variables – beliefs about learning English

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
<i>1. Analysis of variance by language medium background for Factor 2: “The Difficulty of Speaking and Learning English”</i>					
Between groups	4.506	1	4.506	4.627	.032
Within groups	234.686	241	.974		
Total	239.192	242			
<i>2. Analysis of variance by experience visiting or living in an English-speaking country for Factor 2: “The Difficulty of Speaking and Learning English”</i>					
Between groups	16.382	2	8.191	8.652	.000
Within groups	255.618	270	.947		
Total	272.000	272			

Appendix D. ANOVA results: influence of background variables – beliefs about learning French

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	p
<i>1. Analysis of variance by language medium background for Factor 1: “Motivation/confidence in speaking French”</i>					
Between groups	62.946	1	62.946	84.710	.000
Within groups	171.652	231	.743		
Total	234.598	232			
<i>2. Analysis of variance by gender for Factor 1: “Motivation/confidence in speaking French”</i>					
Between groups	10.020	1	10.020	10.378	.001
Within groups	252.980	262	.966		
Total	263.000	263			

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