

The Role of Media in Developing and Revitalizing the Kurdish Language

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Abstract: God created human beings with unique capacities that distinguish them from animals. The ability to learn and communicate using language is one of them. Acquiring more than one language is a virtue and a blessing to humankind. This enables them to communicate with other people from different nations, cultures, religions, and languages. When the mother tongue is suppressed and ousted by a new, dominant, acquired language, it is no longer a blessing. This will gradually weaken the mother tongue and ultimately will lead to the language's death. The Kurdish language faces the same dilemma since most Kurds acquired the Arabic language because of several reasons: firstly, it is their religion's language; secondly, they need to interact with the neighboring countries. Finally, Kurds went through the Arabization process by the past regimes. Acquiring and using Arabic placed the Kurdish language in a danger zone recently since it gradually ousted the Kurdish. To Kurds, language is far more than just a means of communication, Kurdish language is the identity and pedigree of Kurds and a symbol of Kurds' unity. Many attempts have been made to save it from oblivion. In general, mass media played a vital role in this regard despite the absence of a standard Kurdish language. Television is the guardian of the Kurdish language and Kurdish unity.

Keywords: Media, Language Revitalization, Language Standardization, Arabization, loan words.

Introduction

1.1 The Origin of the Kurdish Language

The Kurdish language is considered an Indo-European Language. It is a descent from the Indo-Iranian branch alongside Persian, Tadjik, Pashto, Ossetic, and Baluchi. (Crystal, 2006; Kapović, 2017; Steinberg, 2005; Robert W. Beekes, 2011). It is spoken approximately by 30 million Kurds all over the world, divided, mainly, in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria (Balata, 2010 P 9). Kurdish, being an Iranian language, is taken for granted fact by most scholars. However, Crystal (2006 :378) doubts the classification of the Iranian language's branches as he wrote, " many of these languages, with an innumerable dialect, have not received a definite classification".

Linguists use two approaches to classify languages: the genetic classification and the typological classification. The genetic approach depends on the assumption that languages have common ancestors. In this approach, linguists use comparative methods using ancient texts to show connections between languages that are considered genetically related. Steinberg (2005 :313) sees this method invalid as he sees that this approach is suffering from a lack of data. The existence of common features between languages can return long contact between the languages – this contact results in borrowing a huge number of words, sounds, morphemes, or syntactic structures. The same can be said about the Kurdish language; the existence of many Iranian vocabularies in the Kurdish language could be due to the

long contact between the two languages. Not only because of the geographical distribution only, but also many Kurdish areas are under the control of the Iranian government.

1.2 The state of the Kurdish Language

Within this huge number of speakers of the Kurdish language, it is expected that it is safe from endangerment zone, but unfortunately this is not the fact. "Being Strong numerically, however, has not always resulted in the official recognition of Kurdish, nor has it helped the language to be immune from stigmatization, suppression, and even endangerment" (Sheyholislam, 2015 :30). Kurdish language faced and is still facing some serious challenges; since Kurds are suppressed, they were not allowed to speak their mother tongue for a long period of time because of social and political reasons. Nowadays, Kurdish is officially recognized in Iraq alongside Arabic, but it is not the case in Syria, Turkey, and Iran.

Kurdish is divided into five main dialects :Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji), Central Kurdish (Sorani), Southern Kurdish, Gorani, and Zazaki. Sheyholislam (2015:30) believes that.

"Different policies towards Kurdish, coupled with other geographical and socio-economic factors, have contributed to the rise of particular challenges for the language. Among these are the lack of a common standard language, a unified writing system and mutual intelligibility across the main dialect groups – which are influenced by various aspects of the dominant state languages (sound system, vocabulary, grammar, idioms, and other discourse features)."

Even in a country where Kurdish is an official language, it has its share of problems. For instance, the lack of a standard language, the constant conflict between Sorani and Kurmanji on which varieties to be used and considered a standard dialect, the lack of a unified, agreed-upon writing system.... etc.

The Kurdish language has 34 letters, some scholars such as Nizamadin (n.d.) as cited in (Nawkhus and Khushnaw, 2009: 35) do not consider (ح, ع, غ, ق) letters to be a part of the Kurdish alphabet.

ا	ب	پ	ت	ج	چ	ح	خ	د	ر	ز	ژ	س	ش	ع	غ
x	'	ş	s	j	z	rr	r	d	x	ñ	ç	c	t	p	b
xa															
xa															
[x]	[ʔ]	[ʃ]	[s]	[ʒ]	[z]	[r]	[d]	[x]	[h]	[tʃ]	[t]	[p]	[b]	[a]	
ه	و	ۆ	ی	ئ	د	ن	م	ل	گ	ک	ق	ف	ڤ	ڤ	ڤ
é	y,i	o	û	w,u	e	h	n	m	ll	l	g	k	q	v	f
é	y,i	o	û	w,u	e	h	n	m	ll	l	g	k	q	v	f
[e]	[jɪ:]	[o]	[u:]	[w/u]	[ɛ]	[h]	[n]	[m]	[l]	[l]	[g]	[k]	[q]	[v]	[f]

1.3 The Importance of the Kurdish Language

Kurdish language is the holder and the guardian of Kurdish history and is the carrier of Kurds' cultural identity. "Enshrined in a language is the whole of a community's history, and a large part of its' cultural identity" (Crystal, 2006 :339). Johnson's opinion accords with crystal as he states that "languages are the pedigree of nations," as cited in

Aitchison (2004:235). Qadir (2013: 8) agrees with them as he sees language in all its meanings as the carrier of a nation's identity and signature. That means the weakening and the death of a language is equivalent to the death of a significant component of a nation, if not equal to the weakening death of the entire nation.

The Kurdish language is the identity of all Kurds. The death of the Kurdish language is equivalent to the death of Kurds. This statement evokes some questions :is Kurdish an endangered language despite the existence of a huge number of Kurdish speakers? Does it need to be saved? The simple answer is yes. Crystal (2006 :337) introduces three reasons for language death ranging from "natural disasters, through different forms of cultural assimilation, to genocide". Kurds are exposed to all types of hardships and disasters such as genocide, exile, dislocation, Arabization, the demographical change of Kurdish etc. However, they were able to survive and maintain their language. What threatens the Kurdish language is what Crystal calls " cultural Assimilation".

The Kurdish language has been the subject to the linguistics imperialism. Linguistic imperialism is defined as "a particular theory for analyzing relations between dominant and dominated cultures, ..." (Philipson, 1992: 15). Galtung 1980 as cited in (Philipson, 1992: 52) introduces six types of imperialism: economic, political, military, communication, cultural, and social. Philipson (ibid: 53) presents two reasons for linguistic imperialism to pervades other types of imperialism. "The first has to do with form (language as a medium for transmitting ideas), the second with content. Linguistic imperialism dovetails with other types of imperialism and is an integral part of them". The dominant languages (Turkish, Arabic, Persian) weaken and take the place of the native language of Kurds in Eastern, northern, and western Kurdistan since all these types of imperialism are evidently noticed and practiced in these countries. Consequently, The Kurdish language is footnoted and is considered vernacular in Turkey, Iran, and Syria. In Iran, Kurdish is regarded as a mere regional dialect, while Turkey is openly hostile to its promotion and use (Rudaw, 2019). As a result, most Kurds are bilingual, and even the new generation is not familiar with the Kurdish language. For them, " to achieve a better life quality is their excuse to use and learn the dominant language" (ibid). If this situation lasts for a longer period of time, the Kurdish language will die because not only language dies when the last speaker of a language dies, but also when speakers of a language cease to speak their own language and adopt a new one.

Kurdish Language not only reflects the identity of Kurds but also, according to the majority of Kurds, a unified Kurdish language is the only way to merge the borders among the four parts of Kurdistan and achieve Kurds biggest dream, hopefully, soon a reality, to have a united, unified Kurdistan and with their own state. Badirkhan states in an article published in Hawar newspaper in 1939 that uniting the Kurdish nation begins with standardizing the Kurdish language (as cited in Barwary, 2011: 299).

1.4 The Effect of the Arabic Language on the Kurdish Language

In southern Kurdistan, the effect of the Arabic language on Kurdish was tremendous. Before 1991, the Majority of Kurds were and still are bilingual. They were able to speak both Kurdish and Arabic languages fluently. The best example of the extent of the Arabic language's impact on Kurdish can be evidently seen in the Kurdistan newspaper published in 1898 in Kairo:.



The front page of the newspaper started with (بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم). This is an Arabic expression, which is an opening verse of most of the Holy Quran Surah. The newspaper's opening line reflects the extent to which the Kurdish language was influenced by Arabic. It shows that this influence's roots extend beyond the social and political factors to have some religious dimensions. Similarly, it can be easily noticed that the Kurdish grammatical structures are used in this article. However, the majority of slots are filled up with Arabic vocabularies which have undergone some morphological changes to suit these structures such as (احاديث شريفة, أيتين جليله, علماندن, حق, زكا, معرفت, علم, خلق, تعالى, شكر, حمد) , (ث, صعد, ظانين, وارثين, نطانن, آم, مظن, آزي, حمياده, سطوی) in (ا, ح, ص, ظ, ط, ع, ر, ... etc. In addition to that this, the author used Arabic letters to write Kurdish words such as (قوم, جريده, مدرسه, مكتب) despite the existence of Kurdish equivalent letters. Surprisingly, approximately 70% of this article contains Arabic words and letters, yet it is still comprehensible by Kurdish people nowadays.

Many factors corroborated this influence. The first factor is the fact that the Kurdish language was neglected for a long period of time during the rule of Iraqi past regimes. Living under the control of Iraqi regimes, the Kurdish language was considered colloquial, vulgar, and speaking. It was attributed to the lack of education while speaking Arabic was a sign of education and was accompanied by high prestige by Arabs and Kurds themselves. This context

and these ideologies were the outcomes of a well thought out plan of Iraq regimes. By creating these ideologies, they tended to murder the Kurdish language and to weaken Kurds, and to destroy their unity and identity by Kurds themselves. This situation was similar to what is described by Crystal (2006 :338) when he says "within a generation -sometimes even with a decade- healthy bilingualism in a family can slip into a self-conscious semilingualism, and thence into monolingualism which places that language one step nearer to extinction". Besides, many Kurdish areas faced Arabization as many Kurds were exiled to Arabic areas, and Arab citizens were placed in Kurdish areas.

Nowadays, this can be easily noticed and felt even by ordinary people when the Kurds in disputed areas talk. One can notice that they use the Kurdish language structure, but most of the sentence's slots are filled with Arabic vocabularies.

ست نهف قطعاً خارجی مه فه هم نهکر

Translation :Ms. We did not understand this passage.

This simple sentence is uttered by a Kurdish speaker living in disputed areas. It is noticed that he is using Kurdish language structure, but the words (ست, قطعاً, خارجی, مه فه هم) are loan words from Arabic. All these words have their equivalents in the Kurdish Language; they can be replaced with (تیگههشتن, دهرمکی, پارچه نفیسین, ماموستا). This is a case of extreme borrowing. Aitchison (2004 :236) states that in the case of extensive borrowing of forms from socially dominant language, the language gradually demolishes itself until it destroys its own identity, i.e. it commits suicide, or the language will be murdered by dominant language because simply "it gradually suppresses and ousts the subsidiary on".

It is worth noting that Kurds in the disputed areas usually use Arabic when they communicate because they are still under the Iraqi government's influence and control. They are not considered a part of Kurdistan Region by Iraqi government. The state of Kurdish language in Kurdistan Region would have been the same, if Kurdistan Region Government was not established.

The other dimension of this influence can be credited to the religious state of Kurdistan. Kurdistan is multireligious and multiethnic society. It embraces Islam, Yezidi, Christianity...etc. The majority of Kurds are Muslims, so the existence of many Arabic vocabularies is something normal. When Kurds talk about religious ceremonies, they use many Arabic Vocabularies because the Holy Quran is written in the Arabic Language. They pray five times a day using Arabic Quranic verses Yousif (2007) affirms that even in spiritual, religious ceremonies, Kurds used their mother tongue. However, different policies of Iraqi regimes towards Kurds changed this fact. Nowadays, many religious books are translated from Arabic to Kurdish, including the holy Quran (Tafsira Zhyan). This helps Kurds better understand Islam's religious rules and principles, and it converses the impact of Arabic on Kurdish. Yousif sees that there is a solid spiritual connection between language and religion. Each religion has its own language to reveal its message. This strong connectivity returns to the extent of the individuals' and society's appreciation and desire to learn about a religion (ibid: 20-21). Many may consider Arabic to be superior to other languages simply because it is the language of Islam and the Holy Quran. However, in many verses, the Holy Quran itself assures that language is used as an instrument to clarify the rules and principles of the religion. This is clearly mentioned in surah Dukhan verse 58 (498) ﴿فَانْمَا يَـسْـرَـنَا لَعَلَّہُمْ یَتَذَکَّرُوْنَ﴾. There is also a clear reference to this fact in surah Ibrahim verse (4) ﴿وَمَا اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِہٖ﴾. There is no reference to the superiority of the Arabic language over other languages in the Holly Quran. Yousef claims that being associated with religion makes people adopt and accept many cultural and social attitudes connected to the community and language through which this religion is written and revealed

(ibid). There is a common belief in Kurdish society, stating that Arabic is the language of people of paradise in the Judgement day. This ideology makes them believe that Arabic is a superior language.

2.1 Language and Media

Qadir (2013: 15) sees that all types of mass media (audio, spoken, written, or electronic) can easily reach all homes and address all social classes. The impact of media on language could be destructive or constructive. It can be constructive because it develops the language level by introducing new terms, concepts, and expressions that enrich the language. Besides, it can be seen as a means of teaching and educating those social classes who are deprived of the opportunity to study in schools. It can be destructive because neglecting language's linguistic and grammatical rules will weaken and destroy that language.

Media uses language as a tool to convey messages, transmit information, create ideologies, and pass these messages, ideologies, and information to the audiences, i.e., to communicate with their audiences. Conversely, media can be used as means of protecting a language from oblivion by constantly purifying language from foreign words and constantly paving the way for new words to make their way to language through word-formation processes such as conversion, blends, derivation, compounding ...etc. This task is done by experts and linguists who work in mass media. In television, reporters, speakers, programmers...etc. are not responsible and may suffer from a lack of expertise to form new words simply because they have limited freedom to adjust the programs' content, language, and questions. This should be systematically planned by language experts and carefully executed by programmers. The importance of media does not lie in forming new words to meet the nowadays linguistic necessities, but it lies in introducing and familiarizing people with these new words. Musher Dzaii and Ali Slevanay view that educational settings and media are the best means of spreading a language and encouraging individuals to use it (ibid: 204).

Thornborrow (1999: 44) views media as a potentially powerful force in as it has control over which news to be revealed, "who gets into the papers and onto television and radio and, most importantly for linguists, the way that those stories get told, and the frameworks in which people get to appear and talk".

2.2 The Role of Television in Reducing the Effect of Arabic on Kurdish

The mass media, in general, television in particular, had a significant role in revitalizing the Kurdish language. After the 1991 uprising, the Iraqi Regime lost its control over southern Kurdistan. The Kurdistan Region Government was established. Televisions started broadcasting in Kurdish. The Kurdish language was deeply affected and injured by Arabic, especially in the Duhok governorate. People did not feel this effect's size because these changes did not happen abruptly, but they gradually happened. The role of media was constructive as its work to reverse this effect.

The majority of Kurds were bilingual; they were proficient speaker of Kurdish and Arabic; Kurdistan Region Government uses a system of so-called language nests adopted by Maori in New Zealand to revive Kurdish. O'Grady, Archibald, Aronoff, and Miller (2005 :641) define language nest as " an educational program for preschoolers in which a (usually endangered) minority language is used exclusively". In this method, the government uses television as a means of exposing Kurdish children to their mother tongue. Thornborrow states, "We use the media for many different purposes; for information, for entertainment, and education, through a range of programs for schools as well as university broadcasts (1999: 44). Sontag, as cited in (Michael, 1979:58) agrees with Thornborrow as he states that:

" Today in our cities most learning occurs outside the classroom. The sheer quantity conveyed by press – magazines- film- TV-radio far exceeds the quantity of information conveyed by school instruction and texts. This challenge has destroyed to monopoly of the books as a teaching aid and cracked they very walls of classroom so suddenly that we're confused and baffled".

In this way, television was used for educational purposes in Iraqi Kurdistan. It was successful to a large extent since it played a key role in teaching the Kurdish language to the new generations and reducing the influence of Arabic on the Kurdish. Zubian (1987: 48-49) view that TV fascination has a tremendous influence on children and on those classes who did not have education and learning chance in society as 85% of information transmitted by mass media are true and accurate. Education aims to transform the national and social culture from one generation to another and develop individuals' personalities. In this regard, education and media are the same since both aim to change behaviors, and it is a way of adaptation in life so that the learner will live a better life in a peaceful community.

In addition to this, learning through the mass media happens in a positive, supportive, fun, and encouraging environment as TV channels put the audiences' interests as their top priority. The television programs, series, movies, shows, reports...etc. are designed in a way that captures the audiences' attention first, conveys a message, creates ideologies, exposes audiences with the latest news and events, and during this process, they are exposed to their language.

Many factors reinforced TV to have this significant role :in southern Kurdistan. Firstly, software technology and internet-only became highly available after 2003, so television was approximately the only way to communicate to the outside world. However, satellites were available at that time, but only a few people can afford to buy. They had access to a limited number of local TV channel such as Khabat TV, Azadi TV, Iraqiya TV, Syria TV... etc., i.e., the number of TV channels did not exceed the number of fingers. Almost all Kurds preferred to watch Kurdish TV channels as it was a unique experience for them to see a channel in their mother tongue and thirdly, the language used in media is the language for all people, i.e., whatever the media, especially Tv., is broadcasting is becoming the language of the audience (Qadir, 2013 :24). Qadir compares the language used in the educational system, curricula textbooks, official writings in governmental organizations, and literary works' language on the one hand, and the language used in media, on the other hand. He notices that the language used in educational textbooks is restricted to students and teachers, and it only works in these two classes. The formal language used in the governmental setting is only seen and used by governmental employees. The literary texts are restricted to a very limited number of educated, literate people who read those texts. The language used in media encompasses all social classes (ibid : 23).

The use of the Kurdish language in educational settings further supported the Government's plan to reduce Arabic's influence on Kurdish. They were successful to a certain extent as Kurdish learners were exposed to many Kurdish vocabularies. This influence was restricted to only learners and the educational staff. Besides, not all children had the opportunity to learn thanks to extreme poverty and the region's critical economic situation, so many learners were obliged to skip school and work. Nevertheless, one cannot underestimate the importance of this step as it incorporated the most important part of Kurdish society, children, as they are the future of our country and the guardians of the Kurdish language. The curriculum encountered many critics because the dialect used in the books was Sorani Dialect (central Kurdish), and at that time, it was not intelligible by Kurds in Duhok governorate. The situation was intricate, as the teaching staff were familiar with the Arabic language in explaining lectures, the books were written in Sorani dialect, and the learners talked northern Kurdish (Kurmanji). Despite all these critics and difficulties, thank to this curriculum nowadays, both Sorani and Kurmanji dialects are mutually intelligible by Kurdish learners.

The results of the Kurdistan region government efforts were fruitful. The majority of Kurdish speakers aged above 35 are bilingual, they are fluent speakers of Kurdish and Arabic, but most speaker under the age of 35 not only have complete exposure to Kurdish, but they have mutual intelligibility in both Sorani and Badini/Kurmanji varieties, the prominent dialects in southern Kurdistan. Both educational organizations and media work side by side to save the Kurdish language, as media further supports what children learnt from school.

Yousif (2007: 189) is of the belief that the southern Kurdistan experience had an active influence on the whole parts of Kurdistan as the Kurdish national language is witnessing progress, especially the existence of some satellite channels broadcasting in Kurdish farther supported this sacred mission. Nevertheless, some Arabic vocabularies survived and became a part of the Kurdish language. This is typically common in political discourse, and educational settings:

<u>Kurdish</u>	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Kurdish Equivalent</u>	<u>Translation</u>
جومعه	جمعة	ئهینی	Friday
ته سۆیر	تصویر (صورة)	وئنه	photo
شایدحال	شاهدحال	دیده فان	Witness
تومه تبار	المتهم	گونه هبار	Suspect
	تانه	طعن	---
ته زویر	تزویر	ساخته کاری	Fraud
مامه له	معاملة	-----	Transaction
عطلة	عطلة	بهینقه دان	Holiday
مونا فسه سه	منافسة	ههفرکی	Competition
مه حکمه مه	محكمة	دادگه	Court
ئیجرائات	اجراءات	پیرابون (ریکار)	Procedures
ئه خلاق	اخلاق	رموشت	Moral
قانون	قانون	یاسا	Law
ته حه روش	تحرش	ده سترژی	Abuse

احتکار, تاقهت, رائید, ریاضیات, علوم, حیات, به حر, لوقاح, جهلته, خه بسه, مه لک, ریاضه, نه حداس, موهم, قسم, قووت, دهوام, وه زارهت, وه زیر, سه یدا, شایه تی, معده دل, مه سه له, مشکله, خه تیپ, نیمام, مدیر, سیک, و عهید, کتیب, قه له م, موزایه ده, مه دره سه, صبور, شهاده, جدی, اختصاص, ئمتیحان, نه ساس, مه منون, جالیه, ده ور, که لیمه,

...etc. The majority of these words have their equivalents in Kurdish (سەختەکاری, وزە, بێرکاری, زانست, وەرزش, پشک, ماموستا, تێکرا, پرسگری, ژێفەبەر,) (پێنوس, ئەزموون, رسوا, خۆل, پەیف, گلهوگاژنده, گازنده, بازار, جهۆن, پەرتوک, تایبەتمەندی, تەختە رەش, دەرچو, رەفەندی, باوەرنامه, زانکو, خوێندنگە, تاقیگە, سازش, etc.), while the rest of words are loan words and are a part of Kurdish language. In an institution, school, where government is teaching new generation the Kurdish language and tries to eliminate the influence of Arabic language, one can notice that the majority of Arabic words related to school and teaching survived till present day. The possible interpretation of this could be when a speaker tries to retrieve a word from the mental lexicon to convey his ideas, both Arabic and Kurdish words become available. For instance, when the speaker wants to retrieve a word to talk about the concept 'class', both 'پۆل' and 'صف' become active in the mental lexicon, so these two words will compete, and eventually the more frequently used by the speaker would be selected (warren, 2013:40). The same can be said about the rest of words.

2.3 Media's -television- contribution to Standardizing the Kurdish Language

Experts warn, "Standardizing its (Kurdish) many dialects maybe it's only hope for survival" (Rudaw, 2019). Standardizing a language cannot be done randomly. Conversely, it is a carefully planned process. Holmes (2008: 105) introduces four interrelated steps to plan a national official language: selection, codification, elaboration, and acceptance. Selecting a variety of a norm, standardizing its structural or linguistic features, and developing its vocabulary to meet the present day's linguistic needs in various domains. This task should be done by all society layers such as government agencies, academics, linguists... etc. These three steps cost a lot of time, effort, and funding, but all these will go in vain without the fourth step's success, securing its acceptance by society. In Iraqi Kurdistan, where Kurdish is officially recognized, many attempts have been made to standardize the Kurdish language. The two dominant varieties in southern Kurdistan are Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji), Central Kurdish (Sorani). There is no consensus among scholars about which of these codes should be selected as Kurds' official national language. Both varieties have a sufficient share of material, reasons, and evidence to be used as an official language. Both varieties are totally acceptable to be selected, and they encounter no problem concerning codification and elaboration. Nevertheless, all these attempts face failure because they constantly fail to secure its acceptance in society. The speakers of the Kurmanji dialect refuse Sorani dialect to be their official language, and vice versa.

The most important step in planning a language is related to how much individuals accept the chosen code. The people's attitudes to the chosen variety are highly recommended in planning a language. Holmes (ibid) is of the belief that in this stage, "steps may be needed to enhance its (variety's) prestige, for instance, and to encourage people to develop pride in the language of loyalty towards it." In this respect, the media plays an active role in securing the chosen code's acceptance since television is available and accessible to all society layers. The language of the television is gradually becoming the language of people in a speech community. Менджеричкая and Ксензенко assure this fact when they state that "mass media do not deliver information but interpret facts, influence mass consciousness, persuade people, make them change their attitudes, shape their opinions" (2005: 8). According to sociologists and education experts, media has more tasks than just spending time such as learning, educating, exercising, and unifying the patriotic emotions that accords with government plans as media can enhance and reaffirm what children learnt from school (Musher Dzaii and Ali Slevanay, 2013: 205).

Some Kurdish channels use both dialects. This enlarges the gap between Kurdish language varieties to the extent that made some people believe that they are two separate languages and not varieties of the same language. Nevertheless, this makes the audiences familiarized with two varieties, which leads, if not to the acceptance of the

selected code, at least, to the two varieties' mutual intelligibility. Some other channels, such as Rudaw, make an extra effort to develop concepts and expressions understood by both Sorani and Kurmanji speakers. This convergence of the two varieties makes the dream of standardizing Kurdish a step nearer to become true. One might criticize that these channels for using words such as (سەردێر, نوچه, جافکانی, کرێز, باندورا, متمانە, پینگە, داخوێانی, رەموش, جقاس, جفیا, دگۆ, سیه, نهها, ئیرو) ,مشویری, کاردانەوه, چاودێر, قەوارە, جەم, ئالین, هەموار, کارمایی, کارنامە, پارفەکر, کاتژێر, شوپاندن, ورە, داخوێانی, ئالییان, چافکانی, پینگە, نوچهگەهان, (....دەردورا, قەیران, دەستکەفت, یەکریزی زورینه, هەژمون, بەرز راگرتن, بن چافکر, بنپی کرن, شەرو پەشچون, لەهه). It might be believed that they are corrupting the language because these words sound unfamiliar without realizing, in this way, they are converging the language dialects. They are trying to come up with vocabularies intelligible by the four parts of Kurdistan. They were able to produce and construct new vocabularies that will meet the new era's linguistic demands.

Kurdish channels constantly present programs, debates, cover conferences.... etc., that shed light on the importance of the Kurdish language. They raise awareness among Kurds. Sayers sees mass media as the best means of raising awareness since mass communication through the 'mass media' is the most effective strategy to communicate a message on a large scale (2006: 48).

Conclusion

Studying the role of media in maintaining the Kurdish language has not been given appropriate attention. Television Channels are credited for their role in eliminating the impact of Arabic on the language. They can also be used as a medium by the government to spread language and familiarize people with new expressions and vocabularies that made their way to the language to meet the present-day linguistic necessities since it reaches all homes and social classes. In addition to this, they played a crucial role in maintaining and uniting Kurds by preserving the Kurdish language, raising awareness among Kurds about the importance of their language, and moving their patriotic emotions towards Kurds. Besides, when planning a national, official language, television can influence the individuals' attitudes in a way that accords with government plans and guarantees their consent to the selected code or variety.

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