LANGUAGE PRACTICES AND EDUCATION IN MOTHER TONGUE: SOME PROBLEMS CONCERNING KURDISH MOTHER TONGUE MEDIUM EDUCATION IN TURKEY[i]

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Özet

Dilsel Edimler ve Anadilinde Eğitim: Türkiye'de Kürtçe Anadilinde Eğitime Dair Bazı Sorunlar

Türkiye'de özellikle Kürtçe ekseninde ilerleyen anadilinde eğitim tartışmalarının siyasallaştırılmış doğası, konunun toplumsal ve dilsel temellerinin kısmen gözardı edilmesine yol açmaktadır. Neticede, Kürtçe anadilinde eğitimi savunan söylem(ler), büyük ölçüde kimlik-kültür değerleri üzerinden oluşturulmakta ve öne sürülmektedir. Halbuki, anadilinde eğitimin temel argümanlarından biri, çocuğa sosyalizasyonunun gerçekleştiği ve duygusal dünyasının biçimlendiği anadilinde eğitim sunmak suretiyle, aile ve yakın çevre dili ile okul dili arasındaki kopukluktan meydana gelebilecek olumsuz psikolojik ve entelektüel sonuçları önlemektir (Kangas 1999). Bu argüman, çocukların ilk sosyalizasyonlarının anadili ya da dilsel topluluğun dilinde gerçekleştiğini ve çocukların bu dilde daha üstün dilsel yeteneklere sahip oldukları varsayımı üzerine kuruludur. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin Kürt bölgesindeki mevcut ikidillilik ve/veya diglosi bağlamının, Kürtçe anadilinde eğitim için ne derece sahici bir toplumdilbilimsel zemin arz ettiğini değerlendirmek

amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma, mevcut toplumdilbilimsel bağlamın anadilinde eğitim konusunda hassas birtakım imalarnı sunmaktadır. Buna göre, bir taraftan, özellikle genç nesillerde gözlemlenen dil kayması, anadilinde eğitimde anadilinin salt araçsal yönlerinden yararlanma argümanının zayıflama eğiliminde olduğunu göstermekte, diğer taraftan, anadilinde eğitimin, toplumdilbilimsel bağlamın anadilini güçlendirecek yönde evrilmesinin vazgeçilmez şartı olduğunu göstermektedir, zira dilin muhafazasını sağlayacak olan asıl faktör, anadilinin 'aile-yakın çevre-okul' çerçevesinde etkin bir iletişim rolüne sahip olmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dil Kayması, Anadili Vasıtalı Eğitim, Diglossia, Dilsel Edim.

Abstract

Language Practices And Education In Mother Tongue: Some Problems Concerning Kurdish Mother Tongue Medium Education In Turkey

In Turkey, the heavily politicized nature of the discussions around the education in mother tongue, especially when it comes to Kurdish, conceals the social and linguistic underpinnings of the issue. As a result, the discourses promoting the mother tongue education in Kurdish are mostly constructed on the identity-culture values. However, one of the important arguments for the education in mother tongue is the prevention of negative psychological and intellectual consequences caused by a rupture between the language of the family and close environment on one hand and that of the educational domain on the other hand (Kangas, 1999). This argument evidently presupposes a linguistic context where the preliminary socialization of children takes place in their mother tongue and they possess better linguistic capabilities in their mother tongue. Hence, in this paper, the aim is to see to what extent the bilingualism or diglossic situation in Kurdish region in Turkey assures a genuine ground for the education in mother tongue in Kurdish. It is shown that the language shift observed

especially among young generations renders it difficult to promote the instrumental aspect of the language as an argument for mother tongue medium education, while at the same time it calls for the urgency of the education in mother tongue to contribute to the creation of a sociolinguistic setting in which the mother tongue is empowered.

Keywords: Language Shift, Mother Tongue Medium Education, Diglossia, Language Use.

Kurte

Prêzeyên Zîmanî û Perwerdeya bi Zimanê Zikmakî: Hinek Pirsgirêkên li ber Perwerdeya bi Zimanê Kurdî li Tirkiyeyê

Li Tirkiyeyê xwezaya polîtîzekirî ya munaqeşeyên li ser perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî, bi taybet di çarçoweya zimanê Kurdî de, heta pileyekê dibe sebeb ku hîmên wê yên civakî û zimanî bêne piştguhkirin. Di encamê de gotarên/dîskûrên ku perwerdeya bi kurdî diparêzin zehftir li ser nirxên nasnameyî û çandî tên avakirin û pêşkêşkirin. Lê diyar e argumaneke serekî ya perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî ew e ku bi dana perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî, ku sosyalîzasyon û dinyaya hest û atifî ya zarokan bi zimanê zikmakî şikl û qalibê xwe digire, ew netîceyên neyînî yên derûnî û fikrî dê bêne berbendkirin ku ji qutbûna têkiliya di navbera zimanê malbat-derdora nêz û zimanê dibîstanê de diqewimin (Kangas 1999). Ev arguman xwe dispêre fereziyeya ku sosyalîzasyona pêşî ya zorokan bi zimanê zikmakî, an jî bi zimanê civaka zimanî, pêk tê û ku zarok di wî zimanî de xwediyê şiyanên rasertir in. Lewma di vê xebatê de mebest ew e bê vekolîn ka rewşa duzimanî an jî digolosiya li herêma Kurdan ya Tirkiyeyê heta çi dereceyê zemîneke rasteqîne dabîn dike ji bo perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî Kurdiyê. Xebat balê dikêşe ser hinek xalên hessas ên rewşa zimannasiya civakî ya heyî li ser perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî. Di vê çarçoweyê de, li aliyekî, hatiye destnîşankirin ku zelîna/guherîna zimanî, ku bi taybetî di nav nifşên ciwan de berbelav e, argumana sûdwergirtina ji aliyên bes amrazî/enstrûmental ên zimanê zikmakî di perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî de zeîf dixe; li aliyê din, xebatê nîşan daye ku

perwerdeya bi zimanê zikmakî, şertê bingehî û wazjênehên e ji
bo werar û guherîna rewşa zimannasiya civakî bi rengekî ku
zimanê zikmakî bi hêz bike, lewre faktera bingehî ji bo
teqezkirina muhafizeya zimanî ew e ku zimanê zikmakî
xwedanê roleke çalak/kara ya danûstandinê be di nava
çarçoweya "malbat, derdora nêz û dibîstanê" de.

Peyvên Sereke: zelîna zimanî, perwerdeya bi wasiteya zimanê
zikmakî, dîglosya, prêzeyên zimanî.

چکیده

**اعمال زبانی و آموزش در زبان مادری: برخی
مشکلات زبانی جامعه پیش روی آموزش زبان مادری
کردی در ترکیه**

اخیراً در ترکیه آموزش در زبان مادری، بویژه
در محور آموزش زبان کردی، به موضوعی قابل
بحث تبدیل شده است. ولیکن به نظر میرسد،
طبیعت سیاسی شده این بحث، موجب نادیده گرفته
شدن بنیانهای زبانی و اجتماعی موضوع میشود.
در نتیجه مباحث مدافع آموزش در زبان مادری
کردی، تقریبا بطور کامل روی ارزشهای شخصی و
فرهنگی، یعنی روی ارزشهای منقول و معطوفه
شخصی در حال بنیان شدن و اهمیت یافتن است. و
این در حالیست که یکی از برهان های بنیادین
آموزش در زبان مادری، به شرط آموزش به کودک
در زبان مادری که در آن اجتماعی شدن تحقق
میابد و دنیای عاطفی تشکیل میشود، پیش گیری
از بوجود آمدن مشکلات روانی و معنوی ناشی از
بوجود آمدن فاصله میان زبان خانواده و
اطرافیان با زبان مدرسه میباشد (Kangas 1999).
این برهان، بر این احتمال استوار است که
کودکان اولین مرحله تحقق اجتماعی شدنشان در
زبان مادری و یا زبان خانواده بوده و
استعدادهای زبانی کودکان در این زبان غالب
است. به همین دلیل دراین تحقیق، هدف ارزیابی
اهمیت تناسب موجود دو زبانی در منطقه
کردنشین ترکیه، در آموزش در زبان مادری کردی
در جامعه زبانی واقعی است.

كلمات كليدى: تقسيم بندى زبانى، آموزش از طريق زبان مادرى، **Diglossia**، عمل زبانى

الملخص

الافعال اللغوية و التعليم باللغة الام : بعض المشاكل الاجتماعية اللغوية أمام التعليم بلغة الأم باللغة الكردية في تركيا.

لقد أصبح التعليم باللغة الأم في تركيا مؤخرا ، محور التعليم باللغة الكردية على وجه الخصوص ، موضوعا لمناقشات متكررة.

ولكن يبدو أنه قد تم تسييس النقاش طبيعة المرحلة الخط ، وهذه المسألة كثيرا ما يغفل قضية الأسس الاجتماعية واللغوية.

نتيجة لذلك ، الفكرة التي تدافع عن التعليم باللغة الأم اي اللغة الكردية تظهر تماما تقريبا بالهوية والقيم الثقافية

ومع ذلك، فإن الفرضية الأساسية من الحجج الرئيسية للتعليم باللغة الأم هو توفير تعليم اللغة الام التي حدث فيها التنشئة الاجتماعية للغة الام ومنع النفسية السلبية والفكرية.

فهذه الحجة تستند إلى افتراض أن اول تنشئة الجتماعية للاطفال وقعة في اللغة الاسرة وهذه اللغة هي متفوقة على القدرات اللغوية للأطفال.

لذلك ، في هذه الدراسة، فإننا نقوم بتقييم ثنائية اللغة في المنطقة الكردية و حقيقة التعليم باللغة الكردية في الميدان الاجتماعي اللغوي عمليا.

العمل في جزأين متكاملين : من ناحية نقوم بتحليل موجز للمصادر و هذا يمكننا لانطباع عام عن خلفية التعليم في المنطقة و من ناحية اخرى نصور ترجيح اللغوي للناطقين باللغة الكردية استنادا إلى تحليل للاستطلاع.

الكلمات الرئيسية : تحول اللغة , التعليم بواسطة اللغة الام ,اللهجة , الفعل اللغوي

Introduction

Skuttnab-Kangas (1999, p.55) suggests that the question of *"under what circumstances can ethnicity and language(s) become positive forces and strength in people's lives?"* should be the guiding concern of an educational system. A Kurdish child of Kurdish mother tongue is deprived of benefiting from his/her background strengths; that

is, in Turkey, the public sphere which categorically excludes the use of Kurdish in educational domain ignores or negates the strong points of the student's personality and background. Two recent studies, Derince (2010) and Çoşkun, Derince and Uçarlar (2011) assert that the considerably low academic achievement of Kurdish students in Kurdish region is closely related to such a linguistic and social negation, combined with a whole set of surrounding factors. In the same vein, a number of studies questioning the role of the mother tongue in education have shown a positive correlation between the importance of the mother tongue in educational system and academic achievement (cf. Fishman, 1980; Ramirez, 1992; Thomas and Collier,1997; 2002; Cummins, 1997, 2000). Hence, it is reasonable to claim that there is a close relationship between numerous colossal social problems, usually worsened by academic failure, and the absence of mother tongue medium education (henceforth: MTM education). In other terms, the structural deficiencies of the educational system that ignores the intellectual and affective capital of the student acquired in the family and in the immediate environment are partly responsible for many of the academic and social problems.

Therefore, a founding argument of MTM education should be the prevention of negative psychological and intellectual consequences caused by a probable rupture between the language of the family and close environment and that of the educational domain. Adapted to the Kurdish context, this argument would presuppose the existence of a generation of Kurdish children with better language proficiency in Kurdish and a generation whose intellectual and affective worlds are shaped in Kurdish, in short, who have had Kurdish as the primary medium of socialization in the family and close environment. This paper scrutinizes the taken-for-granted claim that a generation of young Kurdish children with high linguistic proficiency in Kurdish is out there. The aim is to address the question whether the education in mother tongue in Kurdish benefits from a genuine objective sociolinguistic ground in terms of language use and choice practices. The analysis will have two complementary parts: on one hand, a brief document analysis will provide the background information on the education in Kurdish region in Turkey; on the other hand, a questionnaire analysis will provide information on language choice and use practices and linguistic

proficiency of Kurdish speakers from different generations, genders and socio-economic backgrounds.[1]

1. The General Situation of Education in Kurdish Region

Education and schooling rates have always been inferior in the Kurdish region compared to other regions in Turkey. Socio-cultural and infrastructural deficiencies can be discussed, yet only several salient aspects of this inferiority will be illustrated here.

Since the introduction of 8 years of compulsory primary education in 1997, rates of schooling have remarkably increased in Turkey. Hence, according to the data of the Ministry of Education reporting the statistics in primary schools in 2004-2005, the schooling rate in Turkey is of 95%; 99,6% among boys and 92% among girls. As for the Kurdish region, it remains at 85,6% in the East Anatolia while it is higher in the South-East Anatolia with 93,2%. However, two field studies (TESEV 2006, p.107; Kurban and Yolaçan 2008, p.27) conducted in the region indicate that these statistics do not reflect the reality for there is a very high rate of absenteeism especially during the seasons of agricultural work.

As for the schooling in the high schools, the lag between the Kurdish region and other regions of Turkey is much wider. The East Anatolia with 45,1% and the South-East Anatolia with a rate of 42,5% have quite lower values than the avarege of Turkey which is 66,5%. These rates decrease even more among girls. The inequality in access to education can also be observed in the low level of higher education enrolments amog the students of the region, as indicated every year in the results of the centralized country-wide university entrance examinations.[2]

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[1] Note that in this study the reasons or sociopolitical factors leading to the described current sociolinguistic situation are not discussed, rather the study is deliberately restricted to the implications of language use practices of the speakers as far as they relate to the matters of education in mother tongue. For such broader perspectives on the topic, the reader is invited to refer to Haig (2003) for an analysis of official treatment of Kurdish in language politics in Turkey; Opengin (2009) for an evaluation that interprets the patterns of linguistic behaviors in Kurdish speech community against the background of related historical and sociopolitical factors surrounding the linguistic community; Çoşkun, Derince and Uçarlar (2011) for the state policies regarding the use of mother tongue in Turkey and the consequences of not using mother tongue in education; also cf. Hassanpour et al. (2003), Opengin (2011).

[2] Cf. http://www.osym.gov.tr/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFF88F742D0D7112511578 F4E5E296E410 (Acessed on June the 7th, 2009). The name of this exam changed to YGS

1.1 Kurdish in Educational System

In the traditional *medrese* (religious schools) based school system in the Kurdish populated areas in the past, Kurdish was the medium of communication but only partly a medium of instruction. Thus, the language had a certain instrumental function; however, with *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* ('Unification of Education') law of 1924, education was officially closed to any usage of Kurdish. Thus, the school, as the institution *par excellence* for the application of the 'republican condition' and as an institution whose internal rewarding system principally operates for strengthening the dominant social and political rewarding systems (cf. Fishman, 1980), has served as an efficient tool to the official discourse for the negation of Kurdish and its replacement with Turkish since then. Presently, Article No 42 of the Constitution states that no language other than Turkish shall be taught to Turkish citizens as mother tongue in education. However, within the frame of reforms to harmonize with EU principals[3], starting in August 2003, the right for private learning of "regional languages" was assured by law. Following this reform, seven private courses for teaching Kurdish were launched in Istanbul and some big cities in the Kurdish region. However, because of a series of political, legal and economic concerns, these courses were not able to survive and eventually in August 2005, the directors of the courses announced the closure of the courses.[4]

This experience may seem as a defeat of private Kurdish teaching or an indication of indifference of the speakers vis-à-vis their mother tongue, informed principally by the fact that the certificates offered by the courses had very little, if any, institutionalized capital value (cf. Bourdieu, 1986). However, it is also possible to consider, as Haig (2003, p.20) does, the measures imposed on the content and management of the courses, as attempts of a total exclusion of Kurdish from the educational system. The courses nevertheless distributed certificates to 1179 language learners among 1780 who registered to the courses until they were closed down (Akin, 2007, p.35). On the other hand, the Kurdish courses in two private universities, Bilgi University and Sabanci University, form an exception to the strict exclusion of Kurdish in educational system;

(Yüksek Öğretime Geçiş Sınavı – Exam of Entrance to Higher Education) and LYS (Lisans Yerleştirme Sınavı) in 2010.

[3] For an account of the linguistic reforms introduced by the laws adopted in 2002, see Akin (2003).

[4] For a detailed analysis and critics discussing the shortcomings of these courses see Akin (2007); Haig (2003).

moreover, the efforts and discussions around the creation of departments of Kurdish language and literature at some universities in the Kurdish region show that the authorities are determined to restrict its scope as much as possible while at the same time indicating that the issue is a very complex one with probable serious difficulties. However, it should be taken into account that these advancements are not related at all to the teaching of Kurdish to children and to its inclusion in public school system. This shows to what extent the authorities are prudent and reductionist in any minimal overture in regard to the inclusion of Kurdish in education.

Being excluded from education and teaching domains, Kurdish has been taught "illegally" and in the Kurdish cultural organizations in big cities since 90s. For instance, NCM *(Navenda Çanda Kurdî)*, a Kurdish cultural center founded in 1991 in Istanbul, has held many Kurdish courses. Moreover, the Kurdish Institute of Istanbul, founded in 1992, has constantly organized Kurdish courses to create a potential of Kurdish teachers. Hence, the director of this institute declared in 2009 that there were about 4000 learners following informal Kurdish courses[5] organized by a civil movement of activism for Kurdish, called TZPKurdi founded in 2006.

Despite the presence of a certain activism in the domain of Kurdish teaching, it is worth reminding that all these activities take place on a voluntary basis and that a large part of the instructors and learners spare their leisure time to attend these courses. Moreover, the instructors are not specifically educated for teaching Kurdish; thus, they rely mostly on their competence in Kurdish and they are supposed to transfer their knowledge in their respective domains to the teaching of Kurdish. The shortage of teaching materials for Kurdish is another obstacle. Lastly, these teaching activities are not directed to the young and in general the aim is to teach literacy in Kurdish to those who already can speak Kurdish.

2. Method and The Questionnaire

The data on language practices were collected by a questionnaire designed on the theoretical underpinnings of the concepts of diglossia and domain analysis of Fishman (1967, 1968, 1991) and subjective

[5] Cf. http://www.enstituyakurdi.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=192
(Acessed on June the 12th, 2009)

ethnolinguistic vitality of Bourhis *et al.* (1981). Diglossia refers to a relatively stable stage in which the languages or varieties in a contact situation are used in complementary manner; that is the languages are functionally seperated across a set of social domains and communicative situations.

The questionnaire was administered in Turkish and Kurdish to a sample of 76 speakers from 18 families in three settings, namely urban (Diyarbekir/Diyarbakır), semi-urban (Şemzînan/Şemdinli) and rural (three villages in Şemzînan) settings. The variables of setting, gender, and to some extent the age and education were controlled; thus, language choice and use practices were examined according to (1) interlocutors, (2) communication situations, (3) social domains, (4) speech themes, as well as (5) self-evaluation of the speakers on their language competences and the situation of the language.
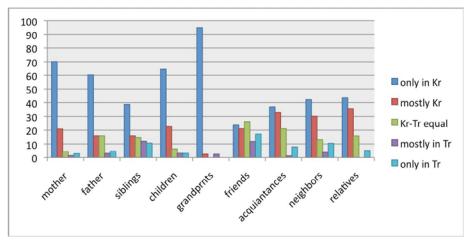
The data are analyzed in the form of frequency tables and graphics identifying the general tendencies, and through X^2 (chi-square) tests to look for probable correlations between variables. A corrrelation is considered to be significant if its X^2 value is below 0,05.

3.   Language Use and Choice Practices

In this part of data analysis the linguistic behaviors of the locutors are analyzed in respect to the variables such as generation, educational level, language proficiency and daily language use and choice practices.

3.1 The Decline Of The Usage With The Generation

The language use varies drastically according to the interlocutor, yet the exclusive usage of Kurdish is most frequent in the communication between grand-parents, parents and children. The graph 1 indicates that 95% of the respondents speak "exclusively in Kurdish" to grandparents. Kurdish is also the main medium of addressing to the mother, with 70% of "only in Kurdish" and 20% "mostly in Kurdish", while 40% of respondents use Turkish in different degrees in their conversations with their father. Kurdish seems to be the principal language of parents to educate their children, for only 10% of the parents seem to be using Turkish more than or as much as Kurdish. However, only 39% of the respondents speak to their siblings only in Kurdish, which means that the

communication between the siblings favors the introduction and installation of Turkish in the home domain.

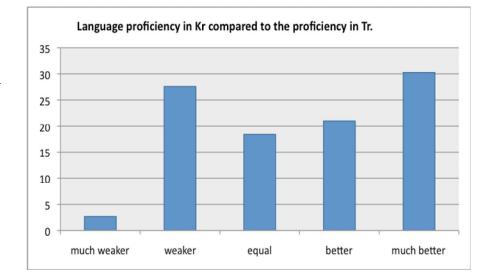*Graph 1. Language use according to interlocutor (in %) Tr: Turkish; Kr: Kurdish*

Turkish is used along with Kurdish even more frequently in out-of-home communication situations. Hence, around 50% of the communication with friends, acquientances, neighbors and relatives goes on in two languages. The usage of Turkish is remarkably more frequent with friends (around 38%) and siblings (around 27%).

In short, Kurdish is used in a much higher degree with immediate social environment and with relatively old people while the usage of Turkish is reinforced in out-of-home domains. The significant part of Turkish in communication among friends indicate that the language of out-of-house socialization is principally Turkish. It should be noted that the use of Kurdish increases when they are the parents, especially the mother, speaking to the children. To the contrary, a fall of 10% is observed when the children address their parents. This difference is quite significant for it points to a transformation in intergenerational communication patterns and illustrates, to a certain extent, a language shift in the new generation. At the same time it points to a generational

and gender-related tendency in respect to langauge use: among older generations, the women are more loyal and apt to Kurdish than men[6].

3.2 Language Proficiency

Language proficiency is shaped by a clear difference in written and oral language abilities. That is, generally the speakers declare that they are rather competent in understanding and speaking than writing and reading. However, while almost 80% of the speakers have a language proficiency sufficient to take up a conversation in Kurdish only about 20% of the speakers declare a relative capacity in reading and writing in Kurdish. Although the tendency of having higher levels of proficieny in oral abilities goes on even in Turkish, very high levels of written language abilities are observed in Turkish, thus only about 20% of the respondents declare that they do not possess sufficient competency to hold written activity in Turkish.

Graph 2. Language proficiency in Kurdish compared to the proficiency in Turkish.

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[6]The social and economic factors behind this tendency and the results emanating from it require a lengthy treatment, which can not be undertaken here. For a related discussion see Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör (2003).

The comparison of general language proficiency (graph 2.) in Kurdish and Turkish shows that 30% of the speakers have a better mastery of Kurdish while those claiming a better proficiency in Turkish are around 10%. Around 50% of the speakers think that they have a better command in Kurdish while 30% are better in Turkish. 18% do not see any difference between the two languages. This comparison indicate that on the one hand the majority of the speakers do not percieve a seriously low level of language proficiency in Kurdish while on the other hand bilinguality or bilingual language proficiencies are quite heterogenous. We will try to see whether this heterogenity and other aspects of language use and proficiency have any relation with the generation variable.

3.3 The Differentiation İn The Usage Of The Two Languages Across Generations

The results of all the the χ^2 tests in which the "generation" is the independent variable showed significant relationships with the use of respective langauges. The age of the speakers are categorized into three generations, namely <20; 20-40 and >40 yaers. The χ^2 test value for the relationship between the generation of the speaker and the language she speaks to her siblings is "0,00001" (table 1).

In what language do you speak to your siblings?												
Observed frequency							Expected frequency					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total	A	B	C	D	E	Total
<20	6	7	8	4	7	32	12,37	7,68	4,69	3,84	3,41	32
20-40	7	10	3	5	1	26	10,05	6,24	3,81	3,12	2,77	26
>40	16	1	0	0	0	17	6,57	4,08	2,49	2,04	1,81	17
Total	29	18	11	9	8	75	29	18	11	9	8	75

Table 1. Language choice when speaking to siblings accross generations.

(Scale: A=in Kr; B=mostly in Kr; C=Kr-Tr; D=mostly in Tr; E=in Tr)
p=0,00001: significant

A comparison of actual values and expected values across the three generations in the table above can be interpreted as (1) a quasi-total exclusion of Turkish among speakers over 40 years; (2) a dominant usage of Kurdish along with a significant usage of Turkish among speakers of 20-40 years; (3) a relatively higher usage of Turkish among speakers

below 20 years. The same tendency can be observed when it comes to the interactions with friends (p=0,000). However, this time the usage of Kurdish is radically weaker among the respondents below 20 years. (see appendix 1). This fact implies that Turkish becomes more and more dominant when the interactions take place outside the house.

As for the media, the generation factor is again quite significant when it comes to, for example, the choices of the speakers in watching TV programs (0,00001) (see appendix 2). The younger the speakers the more they tend to watch the TV programs in Turkish. However, what is common to all three generations is that none of them watch programs exclusively in Kurdish. Moreover, the young generation is distinguished by a general predominance of Turkish TV channels while the indermediary generation (20-40) balances the rates between the programs in two languages with a certain dominance of Kurdish. The older generation is the one who consults the least to Turkish TV channels.

How do you evaluate your proficiency in Kurdish in comparison to your proficiency in Turkish?											
Observed frequency						Expected frequency					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total	A	B	C	D	E	Total
<20	1	13	6	10	2	32	0,84	8,84	5,89	6,74	9,68	32
20-40	1	8	7	6	4	26	0,68	7,18	4,79	5,47	7,87	26
>40	0	0	1	0	17	18	0,47	4,97	3,32	3,79	5,45	18
Total	2	21	14	16	23	76	2	21	14	16	23	76

Table 2. Language proficiency in Kurdish across the generations.

(Scale: A=much weaker; B=weaker; C=equal; D: better; E: much better) p=0,000: significant

There is also a strong relationship between generation and proficiency in Kurdish (p=0,000, see table 2). Language proficiency in Kurdish is high among the speakers over 40 years; while the speakers between 20-40 years show a weaker proficiency. As for the young speakers, they have obviously higher proficiency ratings in Turkish than in Kurdish.

3.4 Education Level And Language Practices

Education level of the respondents holds significant correlations with many variables. Although the X^2 test does not postulate any causal relationship, the crossing of education level with for example the dependent variable "the language of more fluent expression" indicates that the relationship is highly significant and in no way hazardous, as its test value is 0,0004598. As a matter of fact, the interpretation of *Table 3* shows that the respondents who have not received a formal education are exclusively fluent and comfortable in Kurdish while as the level of education increases the comfort of expression clines towards Turkish; thus, the respondents who have completed high school or undergraduate levels are clearly more at ease when expressing their thougths in Turkish.

In which language you feel that you speak more comfortably?							
Observed frequency					Expected frequency		
Education level	Kr	Tr	Total		Kr	Tr	Total
Uneducated	17	0	17		10,74	6,26	17
Primary	17	8	25		15,79	9,21	25
Secondary	5	3	8		5,05	2,95	8
High-school	7	10	17		10,74	6,26	17
Undergraduate	2	7	9		5,68	3,32	9
Total	48	28	76		48	28	76

Table 3. The language in which the speakers have a better expression across the education levels.

p=0,0004598: significant

In the same vein, the education level has significant relationships with the language choice in interactions with friends (p=0,0006) (see appendix 3). In this case, the category of uneducated speakers is marked by prevalent usage of Kurdish. The primary level, however, is distinguished by wider usage of Turkish. It is important to note that 6 out of the 8 speakers of primary level who declare to have a better command in Turkish expression are actually from the young generation. In this sense, it seems that education and generation differences together make

up important determining dimensions of language use patterns among Kurdish speakers.

A wider usage of Turkish can be associated with higher education levels such as high school and undergraduate. The observation is that the more the education level increases the less usage and competence in Kurdish are assured.

Results and Discussion

The analyses indicate that Kurdish remains as the dominant language in family domain, principally due to the fact that it is the language in which traditionally intergenerational communication is assured; yet the presence of Turkish is remarkable among young members of the family. What's more, even if the exclusive usage of Turkish is symbolic at home, the majority of respondents use the two languages in this intimate domain traditionally associated to exclusive usage of Kurdish. This marks the violation of functional compartimentalization of languages, a situation capable of limiting the usage of the low language Kurdish more and more. The analyses also indicate that Kurdish is no more the *default* language of communication to its speakers. As a matter of fact, the older, the closer and the less educated is the speaker, the more Kurdish is used; to the contrary, the younger, educated and out of the family network s/he is, the less Kurdish is used. This marks a dramatic change in the language use practices where a more generalized usage of Turkish is at stake.

The age or generation variable turned out to suggest significant relationships with language use and language proficiency of speakers. The general tendency can be summarized in three points though: firstly, Kurdish is prevalent among the respondents over 40 years; secondly, Kurdish and Turkish both are present among speakers between 20 to 40 years with a certain dominance of Kurdish; finally, Turkish is the dominant language of all linguistic activities of speakers below 20 years. This schema of regression and shrinking of the usage of Kurdish illustrates a case of language shift across generations. Language use and proficieny is also weak among speakers who have completed higher education; however, the younger speakers who are at the primary level of their education are clearly more competent in Turkish and they opt to use it more often than Kurdish.

The present study is far from being representative to all Kurdish speech community, yet it has the claim of indicating some salient tendencies in the community. It is the claim of this paper then that Kurdish is in the process of replacement by Turkish in the socialization of children. This situation at the same time paves the way to a linguistic stage where there may be little realistic ground to promote arguments in favor of MTM education on the basis of instrumental and affective aspects of the mother tongue in education; for in such a stage where the language of the school (Turkish) is also the dominant language of home-socialization, and consequently the language in which they have better proficiencies, the threat of "a probable rupture between the language world in the family and school domains which can potentially harm the child's intellectual and affective worlds" will no longer persist, at least not in terms of conflicting linguistic worlds.

The symbolic violence behind such a situation should be obvious, but it should also be mentioned that even after immediate social functioning of the language has radically diminished among the members of the community, the surrounding pragmatic/symbolic functions of language, such as identification, symbolic value and so on, may well remain intact, if not even more empowered as a reaction. In this sense, at this intermediary stage where the language perceptions and practices in Kurdish speech community are subject to dramatic modifications, introduction of mother tongue medium education in Kurdish can play a crucial role in restoring and assuring the social functions of language in 'home -close environment-school' circle. This is also the way to avoid the probable consequences of discrepancy between the language of self-identification and the dominant language in social and affective dealings.

Lastly, the above analyses, in line with widespread arguments in literature, point to the crucial relationship between schooling and langauge maintenance; however, this should not be interpreted as if the mother tongue medium education could definitely reverse the language shift. Indeed, as it is observed in other contexts (Fishman 1980; Boyos 2005, among others), even in the presence of a well-functioning system of MTM education, the widespread usage of the language may not be guaranteed because the education may well provide the learners with knowledge of the language, yet the usage of the language in social functions requires a social context where the natural transmission of the language and widespread usage of it are the norms, not acts of political or cultural/linguistic activism. Restoring such a sociolinguistic context, though, can only be attained through a process of linguistic normalization

led by local and national cultural and political activisms and decision-making processes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Table 1 Language choice when speaking to friends with respect to generations.

In which language do you speak to your friends?												
Observed frequency							Expected frequency					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total	A	B	C	D	E	Total
<20	1	2	10	7	12	32	12,21	7,58	4,63	3,79	3,37	32
20-40	3	10	10	2	1	26	9,92	6,16	3,76	3,08	2,74	26
>40	14	4	0	0	0	18	6,87	4,26	2,61	2,13	1,89	18
Total	29	18	11	9	8	76	29	18	11	9	8	76

(Scale: A=in Kurdish; B=mostly in Kurdish; C=Kurdish-Turkish; D=mostly in Turkish; E=in Turkish)

P=0,000014: significant

Appendix 2

Table 2 Language choice in TV programs with respect to generations

In which language do you watch TV programs?												
Observed Frequency							Expected Frequency					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total	A	B	C	D	E	Total
<20	0	1	10	21	0	32	0,00	9,95	8,65	12,11	1,30	32
20-40	0	11	5	7	2	25	0,00	7,77	6,76	9,46	1,01	25
>40	0	11	5	0	1	17	0,00	5,28	4,59	6,43	0,69	17
Total	0	23	20	28	3	74	0	23	20	28	3	74

(Scale: A=in Kurdish; B=mostly in Kurdish; C=Kurdish-Turkish; D=mostly in Turkish; E=in Turkish)

P=0,00001: significant

Appendix 3

Table 3 Language spoken to friends with respect to education level

In which language do you speak to your friends?													
Observed frequency							Expected frequency						
	A	B	C	D	E	Total		A	B	C	D	E	Total
uneducated	14	3	2	2	2	17		4,03	3,58	4,47	2,01	2,91	17
primary	3	5	7	3	7	25		5,92	5,26	6,58	2,96	4,28	25
secondary	0	2	3	1	2	8		1,89	1,68	2,11	0,95	1,37	8
high-school	1	4	7	3	2	17		4,03	3,58	4,47	2,01	2,91	17
undergradu	0	3	2	2	2	9		2,13	1,89	2,37	1,07	1,54	9
Total	18	16	20	9	13	76		18	16	20	9	13	76

(Scale: A=in Kurdish; B=mostly in Kurdish; C=Kurdish-Turkish; D=mostly in Turkish; E=in Turkish)

P=0,0006: significant