

Ameen Rizgar Muhammad

Post-graduate student of the Department of
Germanic Languages Theory and
Intercultural Communication
School of Philology and Language Communication
Siberian Federal University
Russia, Krasnoyarsk

**Academic supervisor: Dr. philol-Sciences, Associate Prof.
Oksana V. Magirovskaya**

MODERN LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE KURDISTAN REGION: COMPARATIVE ASPECT

***Abstract.** This article is devoted to investigate the language policy of Kurdistan after embodying thousands of displaced people who fled to the region due to threats on their lives since 2003. It is shown that the region has a modern language policy compared to the neighboring countries (Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria).*

***Keywords:** Kurdistan, language policy, internally displaced people, minority languages, neighboring countries.*

Амин Ризгар Мухаммад

Аспирант кафедры теории германских языков
и межкультурной коммуникации
Института филологии и языковой коммуникации
Сибирский федеральный университет
Россия, г. Красноярск

**Научный руководитель: д-р филол. наук, доцент
Оксана В. Магировская**

СОВРЕМЕННАЯ ЯЗЫКОВАЯ ПОЛИТИКА В РЕГИОНЕ КУРДИСТАН: СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АСПЕКТ

***Аннотация.** Статья посвящена исследованию языковой политики, формирующейся в Курдистане после появления в нем вынужденных переселенцев, прибывающих в данный регион с 2003 года. Показаны отличия современной языковой политики в регионе от языковой политики соседних стран (Турции, Ирана, Ирака и Сирии).*

***Ключевые слова:** Курдистан, языковая политика, вынужденные переселенцы, языки меньшинств, соседних стран.*

Language policy in the Kurdistan region which is the Kurdish-populated territory incorporated into Iraq and considered by the Kurds as one of four parts of Greater Kurdistan is quite different compared to its four neighbored countries (Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria). The national policy is much more favorable in the region since its foundation in 1991. Linguistic challenges and obstacles (such as its linguicide in Turkey and restriction in education and publication in Iran, Syria and Iraq) faced the Kurds in the past can be identified as a lesson for the Kurds who are the majority of the region to have a good deal with the minorities in the Kurdistan region [1]. Therefore, the linguistic rights of different ethnic groups such as Assyrian, Turkmen and Arab are respected and confirmed by the Constitution, and their languages have been taught in schools and used in the media for over twenty-five years.

There are two facts which prove having a difference language policy between the Kurdistan region and the four above countries. The first one is the recognition of the minority languages and the second is the promotion of the languages of the minority social groups in the region.

Kurdish is the official language of the region, but soon after the first establishment of the Kurdistan Government in 1992 the door is opened by the parliament and government for the recognition of all different ethnic-groups in the region, and all the requirements were set out for this purpose. On his book T. Jambaz

points out the education system by the Ministry of Education of the Iraqi Kurdistan Government and the Cultural Rights of the Ministry of Education besides general directorates and centers were offered to the minorities which enabled them protect their mother tongue according to the texts and articles of the Kurdistan Parliament [2, p.119].

Regarding the promotion of minority languages, recent studies comparing Kurdish in Iraq and Turkey, view the promotion of minority languages such as Turkmani, Arabic and Syriac in Kurdistan as «rare positive example[s]» among nation-building projects in the Middle East, where the states have had abysmal records in their treatment of linguistic minorities. J. Sheyholislami argues that the minorities in the Kurdistan region have ethnic mother tongue education and all linguistics rights, meanwhile, Kurdish, the language of more than 20 million citizens, has been prosecuted by the Turkish authority [1].

A new linguistic era appeared in the region with invading the country by the US and its alliance in 2003. Thousands of people from different parts of Iraq left their home and found themselves as refugees in the Kurdistan region due to the threats on their lives. The escalation of armed conflict across the country's central governorates, which began in 2014 with the rise of the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL) and other non-state armed groups, has resulted in new and secondary movements of IDPs across central Iraq and the country's Kurdistan region.

The Kurdistan Region is hosting the largest number of refugees from the wars in Iraq and Syria – a total 1.4 million displaced people according to a count done with UN help [3]. A comprehensive count carried out jointly by the Kurdistan Regional Government and the United Nations indicates that some 850,000 war-displaced Iraqis have fled to the three provinces of the autonomous Kurdistan Region since January 2014 [Ibid]. By the end of 2015 over 2 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) have fled their home towns and countries and have found refuge in Kurdistan. According to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), refugees and IDPs now represent 28% of the Kurdistan's total population [Ibid].

The majority of the displaced people are from Arabic nation. Their stay for years is affecting the language situation in the region and their impact will not be on the Kurdish only but on the language of minorities, too. Minorities' language situation is also proposed to be affected.

Thus, language policy in the Kurdistan region is quite different compared to Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The minority languages are in a good situation today, they are recognized by law and respected. Embodying thousand refugees can be seen as a reason to change the language policy and situation of languages in the region while the majority of them are Arabs and they have a hundred of conflict with Kurds (the majority of the region).

REFERENCES

1. Sheyholislami J. Language and Nation-Building in Kurdistan-Iraq [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jaffer_Sheyholislami/publication/267957869_Language_and_NationBuilding_in_KurdistanIraq/links/54e2b8820cf2c3e7d2d44978/Language-and-Nation-Building-in-Kurdistan-Iraq.pdf ((Reference date: 27.12.2018).
2. Jambaz T. BuniNatawa w SiyasatiZman (Nation Building and Language Policy). Hawler. Haji Hashim Publication Centre, 2014. P. 119.
3. Global trends: forced displacement in 2015 // UNHCR. The UN refugee Agency. 2015 Iraq [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://reliefweb.int> ((Reference date: 02.02.2018).