The Study of Kurdish & Persian Languages Use in Kermanshah

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Abstract—**This study is an attempt to explore the extent people of Kermanshah use Kurdish and Persian languages. Three hundred eighty-four samples were chosen out of** 857048 **population (adopted from Cochran (Cochran, 1977) randomly. The subjects were selected in terms of gender (male of female), age group (Under 10, 11-16, 17-25, 65 to over), education (Illiterate, Primary, Secondary, High school, AD, BA, MA, or higher). The questionnaire is designed on the basis of Parasher pattern (1980). The selection of Kurdish and Persian languages were under study in six social contexts of "family, friendship, neighborhood, business, education, and office" into the four Licker Scale of "Always, Often, Sometimes, and Never". The collected data were analyzed via SPSS Software. The results showed that the differences in the use of Persian and Kurdish languages are statistically significant in terms of age, gender, and social context. However, the average use is not meaningful on the side of education.**

Index Terms—**sociolinguistics, bilingualism, Kurdish language, Persian language**

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important means of communication between humans and it is also the source of life and power in people. In fact, the most distinctive aspect of human species is language (Plog & Bates, 2004). According to Wardhaugh (Wardhaugh, 2006), Language is not an object to study but is what people use. Addressing the communicative function of language is to do with a sub-discipline of linguistics that is sociology of Language or sociolinguistics. Modarresi (Modarresi, 2011, pp. 32-35) believed that Sociology is a related discipline with that of Linguistics; and Sociolinguistics is one of the new domain of Linguistics. Wardhaugh (Wardhaugh, 2006) differentiated between these two concepts. He pointed that sociolinguistic study the linguistic elements as the primary issue in Language and Society researches while sociology of language is more dealt with the effective ways of political and social use of language.

Language change under the influence of intralanguage and interlanguage elements is of inherent characteristics of each language and dialect. Diverse social, political, cultural, and psychological elements are involved in the process of language change. Any language that is socially, politically, culturally, and scientifically prestigious is also highly used and is growing more in use while the local dialects and languages remain on the sideline and are influenced by the other languages (Ghanbari, 2011, pp. 121-147).

There are various languages and dialects in Iran. Persian Language as the official language is increasingly spreading in all areas and thus reduces the use of other languages and dialects that are prevalent in this country such as Kurdish. This language in linguistic categorization of Iranian languages is placed in the North West branch. In this study, the attempt is made to have a comparative analysis on the "USE" of Kurdish and Persian languages in Kermanshah. As far as no comprehensive study has been made on the given area, the present one gets more significant. The extent of use is investigated both in formal and informal contexts to answer this question that "is there any difference in use of Kurdish and Persian languages in different gender, age, and education both in formal and informal contexts?"

Language Selection is a sociolinguistic phenomenon. It means adopting any languages depends on different circumstances and goals (Rahman, 2008). These days, one of the controversial issues drawing the attention of many scholars is bilingualism which is a common occurrence in all countries and it is estimated that half of the population of the world are bilingual (Grosjean, 2011, pp. 10-16). The word 'bilingual' is referred to a person or society who can use two languages in their communications. Hence, bilingualism is discussed in two aspects: a) In individual aspect, we mean a person and b) in social aspect, we mean a society (Modarresi, 2011, p. 46)

There are various definitions for bilingual people offered by linguists. Bialystok (Bialystok, 2003, p.6) attributed different reasons for children to become bilingual such as immigration, education, extended family, temporary accommodation in another country or moving to a new country. According to this, education as an official beginning of literacy in countries where in the official language is different from the mother tongue of the people, especially the children, bilingualism is then inevitable. In countries such as Iran which has many ethnics with their different languages, the main method of bilingualism is through formal education system of the country.

There are various reasons for individual bilingualism. Fabbro (Fabbro, 1999) divided bilingualism into three categories of Compound Bilingualism in which the parents speak in two languages and their children learn the second language from them; the Coordinate Bilingualism in which the second language is learnt before the puberty in the family or any other places; And the Late Bilingualism in which the person learns the second language after puberty. Lambert considers bilingualism as two types of Subtractive and Additive.

He uses the additive bilingualism when the child's first language is socially predominant and has a social value and is not in danger extinction of being replaced with the second language. In his idea, the subtractive bilingualism happens when the first language that is in minority and has a lower social class is replaced with the second language in children (Khadivi, 2009, p. 14). A bilingual society has more than two languages as accepted formal ones but only one of them is considered official language of the country (Romaine, 1994). As a result, we can consider Iran a bilingual country and the people have to use an official language i.e. Persian in order to communicate with each other.

Parasher (Parasher, 1980) investigated the use of Indian and English Languages in India among three hundred and fifty participants in the six domains of family, friendship, neighborhood, business, education, and office. He used a questionnaire for gathering the data. The questionnaire contained the frequency adverbs of always, Usually, Sometimes, Often and Never. Given the participants' performances in different fields, he showed that they speak English in formal context like business, education and in the office and speak Indian in informal context like family, friendship and neighborhood.

Fasold (Fasold, 1987) conducted a research on the change of the language of Tewa Indian in New Mexico who were bilingual. The results showed that English was adopted instead of Spanish but the native language of Tewa was still spoken there. In other words, Spanish as the second language was transferred to English. Accordingly, the younger people are more interested in using English and would talk to the foreigners in English language. Torto (Torto, 2012, pp. 82- 1576) did a research on the monolingualism and bilingualism in Keepkut University amongst the employees, students and the professors. He found that men more than women, tertiary students more than the other levels and people aged 20-24 use the second language more than the other groups.

Korani (Korani, 2012, pp. 1747-1750) in her research dealt with bilingualism and the attitudes of the girls and boys of Eslam Abaad Gharb's Azad University toward the frequency of Kurdish and Persian languages and the influence of their living place on their use. The outcome showed the urban girls are less interested in using Kurdish language. Shahbakhsh (Shahbakhsh, 2000 according to Bashirnejhad, 2005) worked on Baloch Language in London University. He analyzed the use of Baloch Language at home, workplace, education, business, entertainment and social media. The results showed that Baloch language is used in Central Balochestan in every given area. Persian as the second language is used in the cities in most of the situations except at homes and neighborhoods.

Imani (Imani, 2004) studied the use of Persian and Turkish languages in Qom. It indicated that in more formal situations, the frequency of Turkish language use reduced and the tendency turned to Persian.

Ahmadkhani et al., (Ahmadkhani et al., 2012) worked on the position and use of Persian and Kurdish languages (Fili) among the bilingual people in the city of Shrivan Chardavol. He came to the conclusion that different age groups with various educational levels tend to speak Persian in more formal situations and speak Kurdish in informal contexts. The results also proved that in different educational levels, there exists a difference in the frequency of Kurdish language use. In different educational levels, Persian Language use is not used the same. Educated people use both languages in different situations.

This study seeks to explore the extent people of Kermanshah use Kurdish and Persian languages. Four Hypothesis is proposed to take the helm of the present study that are:1) women use Persian Language more than men, 2) younger people use Persian Language more than older ones, 3) educated people are more interested in using Persian language,4) Kurdish is mostly used in informal context while Persian is used in formal contexts.

II. MATERIAL

The research has been conducted in Kermanshah in 2014. The population of Kermanshah is 857048 based on what Iran's Statistics Center provided us with; Three hundred and eighty-four people were chosen as the research sample (on the basis of Chokaran technique of sampling). Three hundred eighty-four subjects were chosen randomly from Kermanshah in terms of gender (Female, Male), age (under 10, 11-16, 17-25, 26-65, over 65), and education (Illiterate, Primary, Secondary, High School, AD, BA, MA, or higher).

III. INSTRUMENTATION

In this study, the data were collected from the questionnaire that is adopted from Parashare research (Parashare, 1980) that has been modified for the given subjects here. The questionnaire consists of thirty-six items through which six social contexts – family, friendship, neighborhood, business, education, and office were investigated. These areas were graded from formal to informal using four-item Likert Scale of "always, often, sometimes, never". Six questions were defined for each social area that are of two sections of Persian and Kurdish. The subjects were asked to have their answers on both Persian and Kurdish aspects. The data were then analyzed by SPSS software. SPSS and Excel were both used for data analysis. The independent variables are gender, age, educational level, context while the dependent

one is just Language Use of the subjects. The responses were all checked out in various areas. The differences in use of Persian and Kurdish languages were illustrated.

IV. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Gender: The 1st independent Variable

The researchers were interested to know the gender differences of Kurdish and Persian Language Use in various areas.

Family context

As you can see in the table 1, there is a significant difference between Persian and Kurdish language Use in family context in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). Upon the data, the index average of Family in women is thirty while it is ten in men that it means the more use of Persian Language among the women. The number for the Kurdish Language Use goes 12 for men and 10 for women; men outperformed women in this context.

TABLE 1.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN FAMILY CONTEXT

	T	df	P
Persian	3/15	382	0/0
Kurdish	2/56	382	0/0

Friendship context

The results showed that there is a significant difference between Language Use in friendship area in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). The index average in this case for women is 18/8979 while for men is 17/349. We can safely conclude that the index average of friendship in Persian Language is higher in women. In Kurdish language, the average index for women is 10/9064 and for men is 12/5839. Thus, Kurdish Language Use is higher in men.

TABLE 2.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN FRIENDSHIP CONTEXT

	T	df	P
Persian	2/67	382	0/3
Kurdish	3/04	382	0/8

Neighbourhood

The results showed that there is a significant difference between Language Use in neighborhood in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). The index average in this case for women is 18/2618 while for men is 16/651. Thus, the index average of neighborhood in Persian Language is higher in women. In Kurdish language, the average index for women is 10/9274 and for men is 12/302. Thus, Kurdish Language Use is higher in men.

TABLE 3.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD

	T	df	P
Persian	3/41	382	0.0
Kurdish	1/98	382	0/22

Business Context

The results showed that there is a significant difference between Language Use in business context in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). The index average of business in women for Persian language use is 22/5319 while it is 19/6913 in men that it means the more use of Persian Language among the women. The number for the Kurdish Language Use goes 10/0872 for men and 8/1574 for women; men topped women in this area.

TABLE 4.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN BUSINESS

	T	df	P
Persian	1/413	382	0/20
Kurdish	-1/893	382	0/29

Education Context

The results showed that there is a significant difference between Language Use in education context in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). The index average for women is 23/349 while for men is 20/6426. It is concluded that the index average of education in Persian Language is higher in women. In Kurdish Language, the average index for women is 8/3756 and for men is 9/9489. Thus, Kurdish Language Use is higher in men.

TABLE 5.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN EDUCATION

	T	df	P
Persian	2/54	382	0/0
Kurdish	2/1	382	0/0

Office Context

The results showed that there is a significant difference between Language Use in office context in terms of gender (p-value< 0/05). The index average for women in Persian Language is 19/6045 while for men is 14/2482. It is concluded that the index average of education in Persian Language is higher in women. In Kurdish language, the average index for women is 6/9214 and for men is 7/9955. Thus, Kurdish Language Use is higher in men.

TABLE 6.
RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR TWO INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF P-K LANGUAGE USE IN OFFICE

	T	df	P
Persian	7/15	382	0/0
Kurdish	2/68	382	0/36

The overall analysis for the gender variable confirmed the null hypothesis that it means gender plays a role in Language Choice of the users.

Age: The 2nd independent Variable

In this part, the main question is the extent of use shared by each Language of Kurdish and Persian

TABLE 7.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF USE DIFFERENCE OF KURDISH IN TERMS OF AGE

		Average Square	df	Sum of squares	f	P
Family	Inter-group Variance	1229/195	۴	307/299	5/925	0/000
	Intra-group Variance	19659/406	۳۷۹	51/864		
	Total	20885/602	۳۸۳			
Friendship	Inter-group Variance	212/320	۴	53/080	1/892	0/011
	Intra-group Variance	10632/419	۳۷۹	28/054		
	Total	10844/740	۳۸۳			
Neighborhood	Inter-group Variance	165/724	۴	41/431	1/272	0/000
	Intra-group Variance	12311/477	۳۷۸	32/570		
	Total	12477/201	۳۸۲			
Business	Inter-group Variance	28/181	۴	7/045	0/316	0/005
	Intra-group Variance	8451/691	۳۷۹	22/300		
	Total	8479/872	۳۸۳			
Education	Inter-group Variance	40/273	۴	10/068	0/605	0/030
	Intra-group Variance	6306/685	۳۷۹	16/64		
	Total	6346/958	۳۸۳			
Office	Inter-group Variance	248/690	۴	62/172	2/830	0/025
	Intra-group Variance	7799/133	۳۵۵	21/969		
	Total	8047/822	۳۵۹			

Based on what is seen in table 7, there is a significant difference with ninety-five percent confidence between Kurdish Language Use in the selected six contexts among different age groups. Results indicate the penetration and high use of Persian Language in family and in younger people. This means Kurdish is less used in younger people. In the other contexts, there is also the dominance of Persian Language over Kurdish. The results all showed a significant difference between different age groups.

Education Context

The main question here is the extent of Kurdish and Persian Language Use in comparison with education?

TABLE 8.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF USE DIFFERENCE OF KURDISH IN TERMS OF EDUCATION

		Average Square	df	Sum of squares	f	P
Family	Inter-group Variance	1/434	۴	0/358	0/268	0/899
	Intra-group Variance	492/990	۳۶۸	1/340		
	Total	494/424	۳۷۲			
Friendship	Inter-group Variance	10/045	۴	2/511	1/369	0/244
	Intra-group Variance	677/102	۳۶۹	1/835		
	Total	687/147	۳۷۳			
Neighborhood	Inter-group Variance	10/786	۴	2/696	1/912	0/108
	Intra-group Variance	516/099	۳۶۶	1/410		
	Total	526/884	۳۷۰			
Business	Inter-group Variance	11/59	۴	2/840	2/188	0/070
	Intra-group Variance	485/511	۳۷۴	1/298		
	Total	496/871	۳۷۸			
Education	Inter-group Variance	106/231	۶	17/705	1/07	0/380
	Intra-group Variance	6240/728	۳۷۷	16/554		
	Total	6346/958	۳۸۳			
Office	Inter-group Variance	520/188	۶	86/698	4/066	0/100
	Intra-group Variance	7527/634	۳۵۳	21/325		
	Total	8047/822	۳۵۹			

As you can see in table 8, it can be said with 95 percent confidence that there is no significant differences between Kurdish Language Use and that of six contexts. On the level of 0/05, the null hypothesis – there is no differences between the averages of Kurdish Language Use in various educational level – is accepted (p> 0/05). In other words, there is no statistical difference between the averages of Kurdish Language Use at 0/05 and the averages of educational level. In so doing, there is no difference between educational level and Persian language Use in Social areas. It can be finally inferred from the results that null hypothesis is rejected – the significant difference between various educational level – and the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. So this means that there is no significant difference between Langue Use and Language selection of various educational levels.

Context: The 3rd independent Variable

The research is conducted to compare the effect of context (formal & informal) in Kurdish and Persian Language Use?

Family context

The result as it is shown in table 9 signifies the meaningful difference between the averages of Persian and Kurdish Language Use (p-value < 0/05). Family is the most informal area wherein Kurdish is mostly expected to be used. Nevertheless, Persian is used more than Kurdish in this context here.

TABLE 9.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN FAMILY

T	Df	P
1/652	383	0/0

Friendship context

The test shows that there is a significant difference between the average of Kurdish and Persian Language Use (p-value < 0/05). This is indicative of the index average of friendship in Persian that is higher compared to the family part.

TABLE 10.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN FRIENDSHIP

T	df	P
18/31	383	0/0

Neighborhood context

There exist a meaningful difference between the average of Persian and Kurdish Language Use at 0.05 (p-value<0/05). The paired-sample T-test shows the Persian Language Use in neighborhood is higher on average. The extent of Persian Language Use is less than friendship but higher than family area.

TABLE 11.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN NEIGHBORHOOD

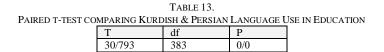| T	df	P
11/926	382	0/0

Business context

The results show that there exist a significant difference between the average Use of Persian and Kurdish Languages (p-value < 0/05). The average index of business in higher in Persian as it is shown in the table.

TABLE 12.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN BUSINESS

T	df	P
21/366	383	0/0

Education context

There is a significant difference between the average use of Persian and Kurdish languages at p-value of < 0/05. The results show that the index average is higher in Persian langue. In this part, the highest difference is marked between Persian and Kurdish Language Use.

TABLE 13.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN EDUCATION

T	df	P
30/793	383	0/0

Office context

As you can see in table 14, there is a difference between the average use of Persian and Kurdish languages.

TABLE 13.
PAIRED T-TEST COMPARING KURDISH & PERSIAN LANGUAGE USE IN OFFICE

T	df	P
22/127	359	0/0

V. Results of Hypotheses Testing

As it is tested, A number of results are drawn that are 1) men speak Kurdish more than women, b) younger people tend to use Persian while the old ones prefer Kurdish, c) education plays no part in the language selection of people in Kermanshah, and d) the use of Persian is more common in informal contexts (family, friendship and neighbourhood) than in formal contexts (business, education and office).

VI. Discussion

1. Gender & Language Use

Regarding the gender variable, men speak Kurdish more than women in all contexts which means females prefer Persian to Kurdish whether in formal or informal contexts. Women tend to use the accepted norms in language according to different social and personal reasons. In this issue, the accepted norm is the official language. In fact, the results are the answer to the first question of the research – what is the relationship between gender and Persian-Kurdish Language use? – That confirms the first hypothesis. Since most Persian Language users are women in families, this can cause the next generation take Persian as their first and foremost language as mothers play a very important role in their educating. So, the role of females in upbringing can be very critical in deterioration or durability of a local and native language. In comparison with other researches, the results of this research confirmed the results of previous researches like Korani's in which the use of Kurdish language by girls and boys in Islam Abad Gharb is dealt with and it is shown that girls tend to speak Persian more than boys.

2. Age & Language Use

Regarding the age of people, younger people tend to use Persian while the old ones prefer Kurdish. This trend in youth can make them forget their native language and mother tongue in the future and the next generations will consider Persian their first language and it will be a beginning to a language change in several generations. Of the outcomes of this can be the fact that the youth will lose their contact with their cultural heritage especially their rich old literature.

The results proved the second hypothesis that is also an answer to the second question of the research – what is the relationship between age and Persian-Kurdish Language use? The results are also similar to the previous findings on this filed such as Bashirnejad (Bashirnejad, 1997, pp. 197 – 224). He worked on the use of Persian and Mazandarani languages in terms of age and gender. He found that 63% of the teenagers consider Persian their first language before going to high school which shows the rising number of families who teach their children Persian as the first language. With Persian becoming the first language of the young generation, the local language is gradually being deteriorated. According to the findings of the present research, the same is happening about the Kurdish language as most of the young people have learnt Persian and tend to speak it in the family and the related occasions while Kurdish is supposed to be spoken in the family as the most informal foundation. However, the second language nowadays has replaced the local language.

3. Education & Language Use

What is regarded a new achievement here and is different from the past studies is the disaffiliation of the language use with the level of education in different contexts. There is no significance relationship between Kurdish language and education in different conditions and levels which shows no relations between language selection in different areas of a society and the level of education. It means people use a language with their own personal attitudes and other factors in different social conditions regardless of their educational levels. A highly educated person may speak Kurdish in more formal situations and speak Persian in less formal places. Based upon the data, it expresses no relation between the educational level and language selection of people. It also answers the third research question – what is the relationship between education and Persian-Kurdish Language use? – And rejected the third hypothesis.

Noteworthy to add that the research conducted in the city of Shirvan Chardavol (Ahmadkhani et al., 2012) on the Use of Persian and Kurdish languages based on the variables of age, gender and education had a different findings from what we have achieved here and that is people with higher educational level speak Kurdish in informal and Persian in more formal contexts.

4. The effect of context on Language Use

The results show the Persian dominance on Kurdish in all six social contexts. However, the variables of age, gender, job and mother tongue have their impact on language use. Based on the findings, people in all the given contexts prefer to speak Persian. Comparing the six social contexts, the use of Persian is more common in informal contexts (family, friendship and neighbourhood) than in formal contexts (business, education and office) which is a confirmation for the fourth hypothesis – Kurdish is mostly used in informal context while Persian is used in formal contexts. It should be bear in mind that the use of Persian language will deteriorate Kurdish language in the near future.

VII. Conclusion

Regarding the variable of gender, this study showed that in all social contexts, women speak Persian more than men do in both formal and informal situations, but men prefer to speak Kurdish. Considering the variable of age, younger people tend to speak Persian more. Older people would like to speak Kurdish while younger ones prefer Persian. But the findings on the effects of education are different from the other studies. The outcome indicates there is no

relationship between the educational level and language use in different contexts and there is no significance between the six social contexts and the level of education in speaking a language. In all social context of family, friendship, neighbourhood, business, education and office, the use of Persian is more than Kurdish and people speak Persian in more formal situations that Kurdish. Moreover, the use of the formal language is increasing and the local language is being deteriorated. Any language has gone through a long journey of time and effort to get to its present condition and is thus the heritage of many signs of its old speakers and carries a lot of cultures in its vocabulary to be transferred to the next generations. It is not praiseworthy to forget a language and stop teaching it to the next generation. Language Planning is to be implemented to survive the local language. There must be something done to avoid language death in order to stop it from melting into the official language.

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