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Амин Ризгар Мухаммед

СОВРЕМЕННОЕ ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ КУРДСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

В статье описывается современная ситуация, сложившаяся вокруг курдского языка как языка одного из самых многочисленных народов с очень сложной судьбой. Показано, что язык для курдов - это, прежде всего, средство сохранения национальной идентичности народа, который много выстрадал, защищая свой родной язык от вымирания на протяжении последнего столетия. Для большинства других национальных общностей язык выступает неотъемлемым компонентом нациестроительства. Показано, что курдский язык по-прежнему запрещен в Турции, имеет перспективы на развитие в Иране и уже признан официальным языком в курдских регионах Ирака и Сирии. Новизна исследования заключается в изучении ситуации, сложившейся вокруг курдского языка, не просто в одной из частей Курдистана, а в четырех разных странах.

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The article is devoted to the current situation with Kurdish, the language of one of the biggest and most unlucky nations¹ in the world. While language is an integral part of nation building for most peoples, it is still a means of national identity formation for the Kurds who have been trying a lot to protect their mother tongue from death for the last 100 years. It is shown that Kurdish is still banned in Turkey, has a hope to develop in Iran and is recognized as an official language in the Kurdish regions in Iraq and Syria. The novelty of the research is in presenting the situation with the Kurdish language not only in one of the parts of Kurdistan but in four different countries.

Key words and phrases: Kurdish language; language situation; language protection; official language; national identity.

Ameen Rizgar Muhammad

Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk

rizgarmuhammad1983@gmail.com

PRESENT SITUATION WITH THE KURDISH LANGUAGE

Kurds are the north-western ethnic group in the Middle East, sometimes called a nation without a state [7]. They have been in the middle of many battles over the past centuries and their geopolitical situation has always been a matter of concern to the world's policy. Surprisingly, this situation has not served their ethnic issue as much as other communities with the similar status. For example, regardless of the utmost cruelty that happened, several countries received benefits out of both world wars, whereas the Kurdish population has never got such things until recent times.

As a result, this situation has affected the usage of Kurdish and its popularity as well. It seems that the circumstances are going to be different since the Iraqi Kurdistan region has got its regional government under new federal Iraq.

The Kurds who are still waiting for the recognition of their language in the Kurdish territories formed in different parts of the globe are estimated to be 35-40 million. Currently, between 15 and 20 million live in Turkey (about 20 percent of the total population), about 6 million – in Iraq (between 15 and 20 percent), between 8 and 10 million – in Iran (8 percent), and about 3 million – in Syria (10 percent). Kurdish minorities, about 2 million people, mostly reside in Sweden, Israel, Armenia, Russia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, and other European countries.

The spoken language of the Kurds, Kurdish, belongs to the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family. It is believed that the first Indo-European-speaking people began to move into what the present-day Kurdistan is about 4,000 years ago. In the next two thousand years, the original language of the Kurds was completely displaced by an Indo-European variety that eventually became Kurdish as it is spoken today.

Kurdish is a macrolanguage that consists of the continuum of closely related languages spoken over a large territory that encompasses Turkey, Kurdistan, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. A large diaspora has spread all over Europe and the United States.

The situation with the Kurdish language changed in the past ten decades, and the Kurds have sacrificed a lot to protect their mother tongue from death and faced different challenges. In some periods of time, the Kurds were not free to speak their native language and were forced to speak the languages of the countries they settled in. The Kurds' permanent demands to protect their native language were mainly mother tongue education, publishing, broadcasting and speaking freely in Kurdish.

The relevance of the topic of the article is in the importance of discussing the challenges that the Kurdish language faced in the past and the resistance of the Kurds to protect their language from death. It states the recent attempts by the Kurdish scholars, educators to take the Kurdish language into a better situation under the Kurdish self-rule in Iraq and Syria and its availability in Iran and Turkey.

¹ The term *most unlucky nation* is sometimes used by the Kurds themselves and those who are familiar with Kurdish sacrifices.

The scientific novelty of the proposed article is determined by the fact that for the first time it presents the situation with the Kurdish language in four countries. There were some attempts of the description of the Kurdish language status by linguists [11; 12; 20], but their works are restricted to just one of the parts of Kurdistan.

The object-matter of this article is the scope of the Kurdish language usage in different sectors of the countries. The focus of attention is on both the present days of the language functioning and its periods of depression.

1. The Kurdish language situation in Turkey

The Kurds are the second largest nation in Turkey, the issue of their status in the country, as well as that of the Kurdish language, has always been a serious one. A long history of persecution since the Turkish state foundation in 1923 vividly shows that, in spite of the Kurds' persistent demands for the right to speak Kurdish freely and get mother-tongue education, the Turkish authority tactically worked on the process of the language neglecting in the course of the last seven decades.

In the works (Amir Hassanpour 1992, 1993, 2000; Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Sertaç Bucak 1995; Tove Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, 2005; Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Desmond Fernandes 2008; Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Shelley Taylor 2009; Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Dunbar 2010) it is argued that there is clear evidence of the linguicide policy in Turkey – the state was established on the Turkish ethnic identity.

The primary goal of the language policy in Turkey was to force the Kurds to abandon their language and become native speakers of Turkish. Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Sertaç Bucak argue that “to kill a language you have to either kill the individuals speaking it or make these individuals change their mother tongue” and state that “Turkey tries to change the mother tongue of the Kurds and make Turkish their mother tongue” [18, p. 362]. Thus, various methods have been used in the past seven decades to eliminate the Kurdish language. In the early decades of the Turkish Republic, the Kurds even ceased to exist as a distinct ethnic group in official Turkish discourse.

Moreover, systematic attempts were made to forcibly “Turkify” them, with the Kurdish language as the primary target.

According to D. Bloxham, “the assault on the Kurds was cast in terms of the broader fight against the influence of religion and reactionary traditionalism (and indeed many Kurds objected vociferously to secularisation) as republican Turkey established a tradition of refusing to admit its ethnic cleavage, depicting the millions of Kurds as *mountain Turks*” [2, p. 230].

The official Turkish state discourse either denied the existence of the Kurds or constructed the myth of the Kurds being a threat to the very essence of the state and its identity. This discursive hegemony was achieved without the actual pronunciation of the words *Kurds*, *Kurdistan*, or the *Kurdish question*. Instead, such terms as *Mountain Turks*, *the East*, *banditry*, *reactionary politics*, *tribal resistance*, or *regional backwardness* were deployed in order to represent the Kurds as culturally and economically primitive, backward Muslims, tribal bandits, smugglers or as simple peasants exploited by feudal landlords [21, p. 14].

This hegemonic construction, backed by the physical force of the Turkish army, created the very basis for the suppression of the Kurds and their native language.

In terms of language, since the primary demarcation between the Turks and the Kurds was language, the elimination of the Kurdish language (as well as other autochthonous non-Turkish languages) became the main aim of the Turkish nation-building project. The Kurds were successfully turned into the *Turks* not only by taking on Turkish as their new language and Kemalism as their new ideology but also by rejecting and forgetting their mother tongue, identity, culture, and heritage.

Forcing the other nations to change their nationality into Turkish was another method to eliminate the Kurdish language genocide. To achieve this, the Turkish government deported hundreds of thousands of people from Kurdistan to Turkish-inhabited regions of the country, conducted mass executions after each revolt, resettled the Turkish immigrants from Europe in the Kurdish areas in the 1920-1940s (documentation is available in Rambout 1947; Kenda 1980; Bedr Khan 1928) [8]. By the late 1930s, all the Kurdish provinces were effectively controlled by the military who established a police post in every village [11, p. 8].

The Constitution is also regarded a mighty weapon in the hands of the Turkish authority to legalize the Kurdish language pressing. Despite the overwhelming evidence of value and benefits of education in the mother tongue, there is no Kurdish school in Turkey. Thus children have never had rights to study in their mother tongue even in the Kurdish territory. Accordingly, public education in Kurdish in Turkey remains prohibited. Article 42 of the Turkish Constitution still maintains that “no language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens” [15].

Nonetheless, there were some attempts to change the situation with the Kurdish language. In 1961, with a new Turkish Constitution, there were the attempts to publish in Kurdish (unfortunately, they were frequently banned as soon as they came out; publishing in Kurdish became impossible after the 1967-1980 series of laws were passed to repress the use of Kurdish). In 1991, the Turkish government legalized Kurdish. In 2006, Turkey allowed private television channels to begin limited airing of the Kurdish language programming, except for children's cartoons and educational programs teaching and thus promoting the Kurdish language and Kurdish literacy. By the beginning of the 21st century, there was also a hopeful attempt to reform the Turkish policy and change the Kurdish language situation toward recognition of Kurdish as one of the main languages in Turkey. N. Watts [20, p. 151] explains in her book *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey* that although Kurdish is not an official language in Turkey, it is predominantly used in the Southeast region, including official political settings, such as municipalities. She observes that in these regions Kurdish is often used for daily communications by the mayors of municipalities [Ibidem]. In one of the author's interviews, the mayor of Diyarbakir (one of the most populous cities

in Southeast Turkey, approx. 2 million inhabitants) argues that: “For a long time during the conflict, one of the goals of the state was to destroy the Kurdish language and culture. One of the signs of peace would be the ability to use Kurdish freely, in public and official places. It was also very important as a way of reestablishing the municipality’s relations with the people. So as soon as I came into office we started using Kurdish in some official documents and in most meetings, except the most official. Of course, there was some debate about it, but it was very important to me. The governor didn’t like it – he told us to stop – but he couldn’t do anything about it” [Ibidem, p. 152].

The Kurdish language was not only used in spoken communications such as in festivals, concerts, and conferences but also distributed through written pamphlets in the Turkish and Kurdish languages. The law applicable for municipalities was somewhat vaguer, requiring Turkish for “official business” but stating that municipal use of other languages for interpersonal communication was permissible if necessary. Pro-Kurdish mayors in some municipalities, especially in Diyarbakır, tried to take advantage of this loophole [Ibidem, p. 153].

Despite this reform, the use of Kurdish in the public sphere and government institutions was still restricted until several years ago. On June 14, 2007, the Interior Ministry took a decision that “giving information on various municipal services such as culture, art, environment, city cleaning, and health in languages other than Turkish is against the Constitution” [15]. In November 2015, the Kurdish parliament member Leyla Zana was not allowed to participate in the parliament sessions any more after she took her oath in Kurdish on the first parliamentary session [1].

In the past years, the Turkish authority has seriously tried to join the European Union and wanted to be its permanent member. Joining the Union was even a great pre-election promise from some Turkish leaders to the voters. Yet, one of the obstacles to reach this wish is a bad situation of the Kurds and other nations in Turkey and depriving them of the basic rights of life such as schooling, publishing, and broadcasting in their native languages, which was stated by the European Commission in 2006 (Turkey 2006 Progress Report. European Commission): “Overall Turkey made little progress on ensuring cultural diversity and promoting respect for and protection of minorities in accordance with international standards” [4, p. 14]. Kurds in Turkey hope to have some reforms in the linguistic policy of the country, but it has still remained as a dream because there’s no positive response from the government side.

2. The Kurdish language situation in Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a multi-ethnic country with one official and state language (Persian). Kurds are one of the ethnic groups in Iran; the issue of their language has always been the matter for the Iranian authority. The situation with the Kurdish language in Iran has been absolutely different compared to that in Turkey. Due to the fact that Iranian regimes had no permanent absolute power in the Kurdish territory in the last ten decades because of the revolutions held, the Kurdish language felt progressed under the Kurdish self-rule periods and went down during the authority of the Shah’s and Islamic regimes.

During the Shah’s regime rule, the Kurdish educators in Iran never stopped to protect and keep their native language from oblivion and pushed the Iranian authority to provide a mother tongue education, but this request materialized only when the authority of the Pahlavi dynasty was overthrown in the northern parts of Kurdistan and replaced in 1946 by an autonomous Kurdish Republic.

The authorities of the Kurdish Republic planned to have a good education process in Kurdish, but from the beginning, they faced a lot of problems. Later the process was going on normally with the help of the Iraqi Kurds and volunteers. Modern education was first extended to the villages under the auspices of the Republic. The schools were, however, closed down by the Iranian government after the overthrow of the Republic.

The situation with the Kurdish language became stable with the Islamic regime coming to power in 1978. Discouraged by the regime’s vague promises of granting national rights to the ethnic peoples, the Kurds themselves took a number of measures in the field of education.

In the spring of 1979, when Tehran’s authorities were not yet extended to Kurdistan, several measures were undertaken to destabilize the Kurdish language. Thus, in April 1979, a committee for the preparation of primary school textbooks was formed in Mahabad. The same month, a project for establishing a university – Kurdistan University – was initiated. Hassanpour [6] stated that the institution planned to use Kurdish as the medium of instruction and one of its four sections, the Kurdish Language and Culture, was aimed at, among other things, the “enhancement of the standardization process” of the language (for a detailed account of the project cf. *Āyandigān*, No. 3374, June 13, 1979) [9]. The university was about to announce the admissions for the 1979-80 academic year when the government’s military offensive against the autonomist movement put an end to it.

The Kurdish language situation in Iran entered a new era in 2002, when the Kurdish Language Academy was established in Tehran and they held the First Conference on the Kurdish Language Teaching. More than 150 Iranian Kurdish writers, academicians, linguists, and journalists participated in this conference and a dozen of reports on different aspects of the Kurdish language were presented. The conference, though of no governmental support, was conducted by the Cultural Institute of Kurdistan in Tehran and the *Peyv* Literary Community in Saghez. It emphasized the necessity of the establishment of an academy for the Kurdish language. Hence, based on the votes of the conference participants, the members of the newly established Kurdish Language Academy in Iran were elected.

The Kurdish political parties and organizations had a great role in the process of the Kurdish language development, they supported the citizens to push the Iranian authority to agree with their demands that have been discussed above. In the areas that remained under the Kurdish control after the government’s second offensive in May 1980, the two largest political organizations, *Kornele* and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, introduced the instruction in Kurdish in the primary schools of the rural areas [Ibidem].

The Kurdish language in Iran is not banned and the Iranian authorities do not show their support of the Kurdish language in Iran but use of regional and ethnic languages in the press, mass media, and Kurdish literature teaching at schools, alongside of the Persian language, are freely permitted according to the Iranian Constitution nowadays, this might be viewed as a positive point to have full linguistic rights for the Kurds in the future.

3. The Kurdish language situation in Iraq

Kurdish, the language of the second biggest nation in Iraq, has been an urgent issue for the Iraqi regimes. This is due to the fact that for the Kurds the situation with their language has always been the priority. Since the demarcation of the Iraqi new borders in 1920 by the authority of the United Kingdom, they constantly forced the regimes of Iraq to give them the rights to have their mother tongue education. Their constant pressures obliged the authority to admit their linguistic rights in the Kurdish territory. In 1932, the royal government issued the “law of local languages” to satisfy the Kurds and to use it as a card to enter the League of Nations. The law, on paper, specified that the government employees in the Kurdish regions must be the Kurds, and schools [in these regions] must carry out the instruction in Kurdish. While this law entered into force in schools in some Kurdish-majority regions, and some magazines and books were published in Kurdish, many Kurdish cultural and administrative fields remained in a state of abandonment until 1958. It was in this year that the Kurds achieved recognition in the Constitution via a single sentence noting that *the Arabs and the Kurds are partners in the homeland* [5]. Thus, some prospects opened up for the Kurds in terms of the spread of their language in primary schools and the founding of the Kurdish language department at the University of Baghdad.

There can be singled out two decisive factors that determined quite favourable conditions for the Kurdish language in Iraq nowadays.

The first one is issuing the autonomy law in 1970 when the first Kurdish university was established in the city of Sulaimaniyah, and the Kurdish scientific academy and the Kurdish culture directorate were opened in Baghdad. Moreover, schools in most Kurdish areas began teaching in the Kurdish language.

The uprising of the Kurds against Bath’s regime and controlling their territory in 1991 is another factor that helped Kurdish to progress. It was the reason to develop the linguistic sphere in the region while the Ministry of Education under self-rule started offering the programs in Kurdish and thousands of Kurdish schools has been built since 1991.

The national policy is much more favourable in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The linguistic rights of different ethnic groups such as Arab, Turkmen, and Assyrian are confirmed by the Constitution, and their languages have been taught in schools and used in the media for over twenty-five years. A recent study comparing Kurdish in Iraq and Turkey views the promotion of minority languages such as Turkmani and Syriac in Kurdistan as a “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 [14] 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. For this very reason, the language situation in Kurdistan deserves a more detailed review so that challenges and obstacles to linguistic rights in the region can be identified as a lesson to the Kurds to have a good deal with the minorities in the Kurdistan region.

The situation with the Kurdish language stepped forward in Iraq in 2003, when the Kurds returned to Baghdad and wanted to recognize their native language as an official language through the new Constitution of Iraq. 7 January 2013 is the golden day of the history of the Kurdish language in Iraq when the Iraqi parliament quietly voted on a law regulating official languages and local official languages. Article 4 of the Iraqi Constitution, which was ratified by a popular vote in 2005, stipulates that Arabic and Kurdish are the official languages of Iraq [5].

Mother tongue education is another right that was confirmed, the article also ensures that the Kurds of Iraq have the same rights of the Iraqi citizens to educate their children in their mother tongues in government institutions in accordance with the education guidelines, or in any other language in private institutions. Section 2 of the same article specifies the scope of the “official language” term and the provisions of this article note that the official documents shall be published in both Arabic and Kurdish. Moreover, the article stipulates that the discussions and speeches in official domains – such as parliament, the cabinet, courts and official conferences – can be carried out in either of the two official languages. Furthermore, the official documents and correspondences that are issued in either of the two languages should be recognized officially. Schools can be opened in either Arabic or Kurdish according to educational guidelines. Based on the principle of equality other official documents such as currency notes, passports and postage stamps can be printed in either of the two languages.

The situation with the Kurdish language is preferable in Iraq today, and Kurdish is the language of educational institutions, publishing the official newspapers, more than 100 local and 20 satellite channels, official domains (parliament, the cabinet, courts), and official conferences. It is also the language of currency notes, passports and postage stamps.

4. The Kurdish language situation in Syria

The situation with the Kurdish language in Syria is also politically determined and, thus, has always been a serious issue of the Syrian state. Its history of almost 100 years underwent several stages due to different political reasons and can be divided into four periods, each period providing different obstacles to tolerate and develop the Kurdish language.

The first period is that of French Mandate authority (1920-46) when the Syrian people, including the minorities and especially the Kurds, waited for having a big change in the political system of the country and demanded self-rule within its borders. As for the Kurds, they were primarily concerned about the Kurdish language status. A petition

addressed to the constituent assembly of Syria on June 23, 1928 included the demands for (1) the use of the Kurdish language in the Kurdish regions concurrently with other official languages and (2) education in the Kurdish language in these regions [13, p. 105]. These demands were stated prior to that of replacing the government employees of these regions by the Kurds that can be regarded as a sign of the language status issue significance.

The Mandate authorities did not favour self-rule in this part of Syria. One reason was Turkish and Iraqi intolerance of an “autonomous Kurdish territory” on their frontiers [Ibidem, p. 106]. According to one of the Mandate officials, Rondot, the use of the Kurdish language was free, without being official, in the region.

Thus, the first period of the Kurdish language situation in Syria can be characterized as the period of some tolerance towards the language. Kurdish was free to talk and could be the language for publishing, notwithstanding the French authority’s refusal to open schools in the Kurdish language and have mother tongue education.

In Syria, as in Iraq, the Kurds enjoyed more freedom to use their language in writing and broadcasting during World War II when Kurdistan became strategically important. The Badir Khan Brothers published three journals, one of which, Ronaha, was almost entirely devoted to the propaganda of war. Broadcasts from Radio-Levant continued from 1941 to April 1, 1946.

The second period is the end of the Mandate (1946) and the union of Syria and Egypt into the United Arab Republic (1958). The Kurdish language situation during this period was different: publishing in Kurdish was continued having the suppression by the authority. After the union collapsed in 1961, the pressures on the Kurds were getting more intense. Moreover, the November 1962 census taken in the Kurdish territory, especially in the province of Jazira, discounted some 120,000 Kurds as “foreigners”, though they were in possession of Syrian identity cards [10].

The third period started with the Baath party of Syria coming to power in the 1960s and lasted up until 2011, the year of the revolution against the Baath regime. It was the hardest period for the Kurds because the government began to build an “Arab Belt” aimed at Arabization of the Kurdish regions. Changing the demography of the Kurdish areas became the top in the list of the racist policies of the Baath regime. Under the rule of the Baath party, the Kurdish language in Syria was banned and there was no mother tongue education for the Kurds [12].

The fourth period is that of enlightenment for the Kurdish language. After removing the Bath’s party from power in the Kurdish territory by the Kurdish force, the Kurdish language stepped forward and became the official language of all cantons in the Kurdish regions. In the midst of July 2011, the Kurdish Language Institute was opened and provided some language courses in Kurdish that had been banned before. The Social Contract of the Autonomy of the Rojava Cantons states that the official languages of the Canton of Jazira are Kurdish, Arabic and Syriac; and all communities have the right to teach and be taught in their native language (see Article 9 of the *General Principles* section) [3]. It also stipulates that “everyone has the right to express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and gender rights” (see Article 23 of the *Basic Principles* section) [12].

This policy resulted in a more developed language education under the Kurdish self-rule in Rojava today. Thus, schools are offering programs in the Kurdish language at three levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced. This situation favours editing and publishing the books in various fields in Kurdish so that other subjects and spheres could be taught in Kurdish.

Language conferences are held annually by two language institutes, Language and Education Movement (TZP in Kurdish) and the Kurdish Language Institute (SZK). The main aim of both institutes is to develop, spread the language, define and review their strategies and educational procedures. Also, in big cities of Syria such as Damascus and Aleppo, where there is a considerable number of the Kurds, the Kurdish language institutes are established.

It seems that in the next few years the Kurdish language will be practiced more and the number of Kurdish schools, institutes, universities, magazines, journals, newspapers, and TV programmes will be increased under Kurdish self-rule in Rojava.

Conclusion

The Kurdish language has always been an actual matter in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria for the last ten decades. The Kurdish educators, scholars, writers, and political parties pushed the authorities and seriously tried to develop its situation. Turkification, Arabization, and constitutional issues were the weapons in the authorities’ hand to restrict the Kurdish language progressing. After years of resistance by the Kurds to protect their language from death, in Iraq Kurdish entered a new era in 1991 and it is the primary language of Iraqi Kurdistan and also one of the official languages of Iraq. The recognition of the Kurdish language as one of the official languages of Iraq by the parliament is one of the most prosperous achievements for the Kurds.

In Syria, the Kurdish language stepped forward and became the official language of all cantons in the Kurdish regions. Schools are being opened, magazines and journals are being published in the Kurdish language, and linguistic conferences are held annually. The Kurdish language stepped forward in Syria under the self-rule.

Somewhat similar positive developments, but to a lesser degree and at a much slower pace, have been witnessed in Iran. The Kurds are permitted to speak in Kurdish, but it is still banned to have education in their mother tongue and Kurdish has not been recognized as the official language of the country yet.

In Turkey, the situation with the Kurdish language is absolutely complicated. Despite some promises of reforms by the government in 2005, Kurdish is still remaining banned and there is no wish from the authority side to support the language.

The issue of the Kurdish language needs more studies because it’s the language of one of the biggest ethnic groups in the world who still strive for their self-determination and have a hundred years of resistance in the four above mentioned countries within Kurdistan.

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СОВРЕМЕННОЕ ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ КУРДСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Амин Ризгар Мухаммед

*Сибирский федеральный университет, г. Красноярск
rizgarmuhammad1983@gmail.com*

В статье описывается современная ситуация, сложившаяся вокруг курдского языка как языка одного из самых многочисленных народов с очень сложной судьбой. Показано, что язык для курдов – это, прежде всего, средство сохранения национальной идентичности народа, который много выстрадал, защищая свой родной язык от вымирания на протяжении последнего столетия. Для большинства других национальных общностей язык выступает неотъемлемым компонентом нациестроительства. Показано, что курдский язык по-прежнему запрещен в Турции, имеет перспективы на развитие в Иране и уже признан официальным языком в курдских регионах Ирака и Сирии. Новизна исследования заключается в изучении ситуации, сложившейся вокруг курдского языка, не просто в одной из частей Курдистана, а в четырех разных странах.

Ключевые слова и фразы: курдский язык; языковая ситуация; защита языка; официальный язык; национальная идентичность.