

Extended Abstract

Examining the use of Kurdish language in Kermanshah and Kurdistan provincial TV programs

Parsa Bamshadi

Ph.D. in Linguistics, Shahid Beheshti University,

Tehran, Iran

parsa.bamshadi@gmail.com

Introduction

Today, in the era of globalization, preserving the native languages, dialects, cultures, and customs has become a challenging issue; in the meantime, the role of local media has gained more importance. Considering the existence of many provincial TV networks in Iran, the use of regional languages and dialects in local programs of these TV networks is of great importance and can play an important role in preserving the native language and culture. The present research aims to examine the use of the Kurdish language in Kermanshah and Kurdistan provincial TV programs.

Materials & Methods

The research data were collected by non-participatory observation method. The statistical population includes all the programs broadcast in the two provincial television networks of Kermanshah and Kurdistan, in which the Kurdish language is used. From this statistical population, the programs aired in April and May 2019 were selected for the research sample.

So far, the research on the linguistic dimension of provincial TV networks has mainly been focused on evaluating the role of local programs in supporting and preserving the local language and culture. Saki (2008) examined the role of the Lorestan provincial TV network (called “Aflak”) in strengthening the native culture of the province and concluded that the programs of the Aflak TV have a positive impact on the elements of native culture. Ghafoori (2012, 2013) evaluated the role of the Kurdistan provincial TV network in introducing and preserving Kurdish culture and language. The results of the study showed that programs of the Kurdistan TV are not good representatives for Kurdish culture and identity. Finally, Ahmadzadeh Kermani and Soltani (2015) conducted a survey on audience opinions about the representation of native culture in programs of the Kerman provincial TV network. The

findings of the study showed that the majority of the audience believes that Kerman TV has paid much attention to the native culture of the province.

Results & Discussion

The comparison of the local programs of the two provincial networks of Kermanshah and Kurdistan shows that the number of Kurdish-language programs of the Kurdistan network is far more than that of the Kermanshah network. Overall assessment of the speech of the presenters, newscasters, reporters and actors of the reviewed programs reveals that the language of the program of Kurdistan TV is much more original and native than that of the program of Kermanshah TV. Regarding the shortcomings found in Kermanshah provincial TV programs, some suggestions are proposed to diminish the existing shortcomings and enhance the quantity and quality of Kurdish language used in the programs: (1) Broadcasting at least one news program in Kurdish language per day; (2) Employing capable and expert presenters who have authentic Kurdish speech; (3) Producing and broadcasting programs in Kurdish language for children and teenagers; (4) giving importance to all the dialects and language varieties available throughout the Province; (5) Producing strong specialized programs on various subjects such as Kurdish literature and art, economy, politics, cultures and customs, sports, health, etc. in Kurdish language; (6) Broadcasting special programs about the history, antiquity and authenticity of Kurdish language and its numerous dialects (enriched with old Kurdish proverbs, idioms and words); (7) Producing specialized programs with the presence of experts and especially linguists in order to emphasize the necessity and importance of preserving the mother tongue and transferring Kurdish language to children from birth.; (8) Producing Kurdish TV series with local actors in their native language, and using elements and components of Kurdish culture and identity; (9) Studying the programs of Kurdish-language satellite channels, identifying the secrets of their success, and modeling some of their most successful programs; (10) Taking advantage of the knowledge and expertise of academic advisors and especially linguists in program making; (11) Making more use of the capacity of Kurdish art and literature, especially music and poetry, in attracting audiences toward local programs; (12) Dubbing famous Iranian or foreign TV series in Kurdish language; (13) Establishing interaction among different Kurdish-language TV networks (in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan, Ilam and West Azerbaijan) in order to share ideas and adopting integrated and coordinated approaches for producing Kurdish language programs.

Conclusion

The findings of the research show that the programs of the Kurdistan provincial network are better and more acceptable than the programs of Kermanshah, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and they have positive effects on the language attitude of their Kurdish-speaking audience, or at least they do not have a negative effect; While the programs of Kermanshah Provincial TV not only don't have positive effects on the language attitude of

their Kurdish-speaking audience but also have strongly negative effects. The most important disadvantages of using Kurdish in Kermanshah TV programs are the short duration of local programs compared to Persian-language programs; the lack of a special program for children and adolescents in Kurdish; the lack of attention to dialect diversity at the province level (The focus is only on the Kalhori dialect of Kurdish); lack of local TV series; using presenters who speak non-authentic Kurdish mixed with excessive Persian loanwords; lack of attention to Kurdish writing system and not using it in local programs. The above-mentioned suggestions for resolving shortcomings identified in Kermanshah TV programs may help program makers promote the position of Kurdish language in their programs.

Keywords: Provincial TV networks; Kurdish Language, Local Program, Iranian Languages and Dialects, IRIB

References

- A'lam, A. (2017). *A survey of the reasons for little use of local accents in radio and TV programs of Razavi Khorasan*. M.A Thesis. Tehran: IRIB University [in Persian].
- Ahmadzadeh Kermani, R., & Soltani, A. (2015). Cultural programs in Kerman provincial channel. *Media Studies*, 10(Issue 29), 53-62 [in Persian].
- Azari, M. (2007). Representation of local cultures in Iran's TV: Critical discourse analysis of Lori culture in *Barane-Bahari* Series. M.A Thesis. Tehran: IRIB University [in Persian].
- Ebrahimi Kiapay, H., & Amerian, F. (2019). Solutions to barriers to the use of local languages and the formation of ethnic identities in IRIB provincial branches. *Quarterly Scientific Journal of Audio-Visual Media*, 13(29), 159-181 [in Persian].
- Fazeli, F., Aliani, F. & Aliani, F. (2016). Examining the programs of Gilan broadcast network (Baran) from the audience's point of view (A phenomenological study). *The First International Conference on Iranian Languages and Dialects at Southern Shore of Caspian Sea*. Rasht, Iran [in Persian].
- Ghafoori, F. (2012). *The role of local medias in reflection of native culture & identity by case studying the network in province of Kurdistan*. M.A Thesis. Tehran: Islamic Azad University, Tehran Central Branch [in Persian].
- Ghafoori, F. (2013). Studying the role of television network in province of Kurdistan in reflecting the native identity of the Kurd. *Communication Culture*, 3 (10), 31-59 [in Persian].
- Hormozzadeh, M. A., & Saki, A. (2011). Local Channels and Enhancing Native Cultures. *Quarterly Scientific Journal of Audio-Visual Media*, 7(15), 32-42 [in Persian].
- Safai Asl, E., & Aram, Y. (2017). The maintenance or shift of local languages in Iran? *Journal of Iranian Regional Languages and Literature*, 7(1), 75-90 [in Persian].
- Saki, A. (2008). *A survey on the function of Aflak provincial channel in strengthening the native culture of Lorestan province*. M.A Thesis. Tehran: IRIB University [in Persian].