A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN JORDAN

By

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Abstract

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This study is basically concerned with investigating the linguistic situation of four ethnic groups in Jordan, namely, the Circassians, the Chechens, the Kurds, and the Armenians. More specifically, this study seeks to test the following null hypotheses:

a. there are no differences due to age, sex, education, or income among the members of each ethnic group with regard to their attitudes to the ethnic language with special attention to loyalty as it is the most positive attitude.

b. there are no differences due to age, sex, education, or income among the members of each ethnic group with regard to their competence in the ethnic language.

Moreover, some more linguistic issues including language maintenance, language shift, code switching, diglossia, and language planning are discussed to determine the linguistic situation of each group. In addition, the relationship between the respondents' attitudes towards their ethnic languages and the functions of these languages will be discussed.

The study has found that there is not a consistent pattern for the effect of any of the demographic factors included on the linguistic phenomena studied. Sex and age appear to be the least effective variables. Education and income, on the other hand, have the same effect but on different phenomena in case of different groups.

The study has found also that the within-group means of communication i.e. home, neighborhood, and ethnic societies, prove to be the most effective means of preserving the ethnic language.