

**Language Situation among the Armenians of Baghdad:
A Sociolinguistic Study**

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Abstract

This study investigates the language situation of the Armenian language among the Armenians of Baghdad. The researcher examines the domains of language where the Armenians use their ethnic language and the factors that support them use their ethnic language side by side with Arabic language. The researcher uses a pilot questionnaire that helped her to create a community profile which gives information about the community. She uses a sociolinguistic questionnaire, which is formed by the information taken from pilot questionnaire, to answer the main questions of the study. She distributed the questionnaire to 50 participants from different demographic background from Armenian community. The study concludes that the Armenians of Baghdad still preserve their ethnic language and use it restrictedly at home, church and in social religious events. The study also finds that the home, the family and the church are the major factors that maintain the Armenian language among the community in Baghdad. It also shows other factors that maintain the Armenian language such as schools, institutions, and the historic events that live in the memory of the community that contribute to the language maintenance.

Keywords: Language situation, Armenians

الموقف اللغوي لدى ارمن بغداد: دراسة جاتماعية لغوية

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الملخص :

تبحث هذه الدراسة في الوضع اللغوي للغة الأرمنية بين الأرمن في بغداد. ويتدارس الباحث مواطن اللغة حيث يستخدم الأرمن لغتهم الإثنية فيها والعوامل التي تؤدي الى استخدام لغتهم الإثنية جنبًا إلى جنب مع اللغة العربية. وتستخدم الباحثة اسبانه الدراسة التي تساعد في إنشاء ملف تعريف عن المجتمع الارمني الذي يقدم معلومات عن المجتمع. وتستخدم الباحثة ايضا تستخدم استبانة لغوية اجتماعية ، التي تتألف من المعلومات المأخوذة من استبانة مجتمع، للإجابة عن الأسئلة الرئيسة للدراسة. وقامت بتوزيع الاستبانة على ٥٠ مشاركًا من مختلف الخلفيات الديموغرافية من المجتمع الأرمني. وتستخلص الدراسة إلى أن أرمن بغداد ما زالوا يحافظون على لغتهم الإثنية ويستخدمونها حصريا في المنزل وفي الكنيسة وفي المناسبات الدينية والاجتماعية. كما وجدت الدراسة أن البيت والأسرة والكنيسة هي اهم العوامل الرئيسية التي تحافظ على اللغة الأرمنية بين المجتمع في بغداد. كما يتوضح ايضا ان العوامل الأخرى التي تحافظ على اللغة الأرمنية هي المدارس والمؤسسات والأحداث التاريخية التي تعيش في ذاكرة المجتمع التي تسهم في الحفاظ على اللغة.

كلمات مفتاحية: مواقف لغوية، الارمن

Armenians of Iraq

Armenians of Iraq are one of the smallest ethnic groups who lived in Iraq for many centuries among other ethnic communities. Their homeland is Armenia and their existence in Iraq predates the Armenian plight which occurred in Turkey at the end of the nineteenth century during and after World War I and caused them to flee their homeland as a result.

According to Rassam (2005) in the seventeenth century many Armenians in Armenia were forced to deport their villages to Iran during the Ottoman-Persian conflicts and some of them settled in Iraq and created small community taking the responsibility of many significant trades and art crafts. In 1915 mass migration of Armenians occurred from Anatolia into Iraq and into other countries due to political conflicts and this increased their numbers of their community in Iraq (Castellino & Cavanaugh, 2013). Therefore there are two kinds of Armenians in Baghdad: the ones who were from the first wave of immigration coming from Iran and settled in southern Iraq first and then moved to Baghdad in the seventeenth century and they are called Baghdadi Armenians and the ones who fled from Anatolia after 1915 incident and sought refuge in Baghdad are called Armenian refugees (Mite, 2004; Abu-Haidar, 1991). Rassam (2005) stated that the majority of the Armenians in Iraq are those who escaped from the Armenian-Ottoman conflict in Turkey in the nineteenth century. He added that “when Iraq became an independent state in 1932, the Iraqi government accepted the Armenians as citizens, gave them Iraqi nationality and all the privileges other Christians enjoyed” (p. 179).

Ghazi (2014) stated that in the eighteenth century during the Ottoman reign in Iraq a confirmation on the rights for Armenian patriarch was obtained in Paris Conference for Peace in 1856 and later on their rights were supported in many other conferences by all international congregations.

According to Ember, Ember & Skoggard (2004) due to the dispersed Armenian population after many historical events in Armenia only less than third of them remained in Armenia while others lived in diaspora. Different estimations emerged to report the approximate number of Armenians in Iraq. According to Azazian (2000) a recent estimation showed that the total number of Armenian population in Iraq was about 18,000 most of them lived in Baghdad about 11,000. The diminishing number of Armenians was increasing in post-war 2013 for many reasons: the security instability and human rights violation against their population that forced them to leave the country and seek refuge to protect their lives. They have been killed and kidnapped and their churches were bombed many times in Baghdad and Mosul. Armenian organizations estimated that up to 3000 Armenians departed Iraq since 2013, a number suggested and reported by recent UNHCR reports (Cavanaugh & Castellino, 2013).

Throughout the history of Iraq, Armenians did not have political participations and political representations even in the recent parliament. It is suggested that Armenians had no interest to participate with other Christian parties nor merged with them because they aspire to have a dependent quota in the Federal Parliament (Salloum, 2015; Cavanaugh & Castellino, 2013).

Ghazi (20١٤) stated that in the nineteenth century during British occupation in Iraq the Armenian community number increased after the disciplined migration from Turkey and hundreds of orphaned Armenians were sheltered in the Armenian neighborhood in Baghdad and many of them studied in the Armenian Latin School from which some of them graduated and became prominent religious men.

The presence of Armenians in Iraq played a great role in the prosperity of the community in Baghdad in different fields. Many Armenian characters emerged and took part in building the Iraqi economy. They were physicians, engineers, farmers, shopkeepers, bakers, and some others crafted in the fields of trades and industry. Among whom was Gulbenkian, a famous wealthy Iraqi Armenian engineer in the nineteenth century, who had a share in the Iraqi oil company in the time when Iraq had witnessed a flourishing industrial movement in investing the petrol of Iraq; and also, he supported many Iraqi social and cultural institutions (Ghazi, 20١٤). Alshannawi (201٤) stated that one of the most prominent Iraqi Armenian character in the last Ottoman age in Baghdad was a woman named (Sarah Hatun) who was famous with her great wealth and her mass support to the Armenians in Baghdad. One of the neighborhoods in Baghdad got its name from the name of this woman because the neighborhood belonged to her wealth (Camp Sarah district) in which many Armenians lived. It is located in east Baghdad near Baghdad-Aljadeeda district.

According to Matar (200٨) Armenians have played a significant role in forming the Iraqi culture: in music, in literature and in many other arts. One of the most famous Iraqi authors was (Yaquob Sargis) from Armenian origins.

Armenian language is considered as one of the nine still-existed branches of the Indo-European language family. Cunningham (2005) stated that “although the large number of loan words from Indo-Iranian languages initially caused it to be erroneously categorized as an Iranian language; it is now recognized as its own independent branch” (p. 3). Their written language had three stages: Ancient Armenian, Middle Armenian, and Modern Armenian. The Modern Armenian began in the 19th century and it is now used. It has two branches: Eastern Armenian which used in Armenia, Persia and India and Western Armenian which is used by the Armenians in the west (Andonian, 1999).

Armenian main religion is Christianity and they are adherent to the Armenian Catholic Church, which is the national church of Armenian people, following the apostle St. Gregory the Illuminator (Armenian Church, 2018; Scott , 2016 ; and Gillman & Klimkeit, 1999). Cunningham (2005) stated that “in 301 CE Armenia became the

first nation in the world to adopt Christianity as the official state religion, eventually breaking from the main branch of Orthodoxy to form their own separate Armenian Apostolic Church in 551” (p.5). Therefore, the Armenians in Iraq are all Christians and they have four main Churches in Baghdad, two in Mosul and one in each Dohuk, Kirkuk and Zakho. The oldest one (Al-Athraa’ Church) was built in Baghdad in Al-Meedan district in 1640 at the time of Murad, the Ottoman ruler of Baghdad at that time. Many Armenians settled in Baghdad after establishing this church and it became the most important religious place visited by many people (Matar, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

When two languages are in contact situation, in one way or another, one of them will have an impact on the other and will result in linguistic phenomena on the use of both languages. Thus, this study tries to investigate the situation of Armenian language (the minority language) which comes into contact with the majority language (Arabic) to find whether Armenian language could have been used through many years and still existed in Iraq.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims at exploring the situation of Armenian language in Baghdad. It shows the use of their language, attitudes towards their mother language and the language of the majority, and the factors that aid them maintain their ethnic language which existed side by side with Arabic language.

Questions of the study

This study aims to answer the following questions;

- 1- What are the domains where the Armenians of Baghdad use Armenian language?
- ٢- What are the factors that prompt the Armenians to use their ethnic language (Armenian) in Baghdad?

Significance of the study

Several studies were conducted to investigate language situations among ethnic minorities in the Middle East but few were conducted on the Armenians in Iraq. This study may be as a little effort to provide information that could be an introduction to more sociolinguistic studies done about other ethnic minorities in Iraq.

Also, this study could help researchers on this area to comprehend the major concepts of sociolinguistic studies and language situations on ethnic minorities. Since this study is dealing with exploring the factors that make minorities preserve their ethnic language and culture in countries use different language with different culture, it is

helpful for people in the same situation in which they find it difficult to keep their language from shift or loss.

Limitations of the study

This study is conducted in Baghdad-Iraq between the periods 2018 to 2019. This study cannot be generalized on all Armenians in Baghdad since it deals with the sample strictly that does not cover the Armenians in Baghdad.

Definitions of the study

Language situation: refers to examining: the kinds and numbers of languages used in the area, the domains of languages used in the area and the factors that help use each language.

Armenian: refers to small ethnic group whose their homeland is Armenia. They left their country many years ago for political reasons and came into Iraq and settled for many years to create their own community. Armenian also refers to the ethnic language used by Armenians.

Review of literature

Theoretical studies

The ethnic language has been long taken up a firm place in the sociolinguistic studies and research since it participates to be a major factor in language conflict. The traumatizing experience of being expelled from their homeland and the historic persecution made a deep impression on the Armenians. The situation of Armenian language which has been in contact with the majority language (Arabic) in Iraq for years may link to the conceptual theme suggested by Fishman (1989) who explains the situation of languages in contact that ends in three possible results. He stated that if the immigrant language comes into contact with the host language will result three expectations. The first expectation is that if the immigrant language interacts with the host language then the immigrant language is lost. The second expectation is that if the immigrant language interacts with the host language; here the host language is lost. The third expectation happens when the immigrant language comes into contact with the host language; here both languages survive and live together. The last expectation will be the theoretical foundation of this study where the immigrant language (Armenian) is used together side by side with the host language (Arabic) mainly the majority language through many years.

Wright, & Kelly (1995) stated that when a language contact occurs it is expected that language conflict to be found:

Most contact between ethnic groups does not occur in context of peaceful, harmoniously coexisting

communities. Rather, contact typically takes place in a context of varying degrees of tension, resentment and differences in opinion. (p.65)

Thomson and Kaufman (1988) presented two distinguished types of language contact situations: language maintenance and language shift. They also presented a pattern of contact-induced change; it is a pattern which focuses on the interaction between language-internal and language – external factors. According to their pattern, in a situation of language contact language external factors are able of dominating the language internal ones.

Schrauf (1999) suggested several patterns that contribute to language maintenance

- 1- The pattern of settlement, which is expected that the first language is maintained.
- 2-Religion pattern through religious practices, prayers and rituals may be connected to the native language.
- 3-Attitudes of speakers towards the language can play a major role in preserving it.

Baker (1988) defined attitudes as

Hypothetical constructs that are interfered, conceptual inventions hopefully aiding the description and explanation of behavior; attitudes are learned predispositions, not inherited or generically endowed and are likely to be relatively stable over time. (p. 114)

Language maintenance and language shift according to Fishman (1972) could be the result of many social, cultural, or psychological factors. Language maintenance is concerned with language persistence where it is transferred from one generation to another despite the existence of other languages used by the community while language shift occurs when the younger generations of the immigrants' community tend to use the majority language that is used by the dominant community.

Holmes et al. (1993) observed the "language maintenance" concerning the three different ethnic minorities in New Zealand (Tongan, Greek, and Chinese communities). They found that there were several factors which attributed to language maintenance.

- 1- Regular social communication between community members.
- 2- Community language use in the home.
- 3- Residential closeness.
- 4- Withstand to inter-ethnic marriage.
- 5- Upholding for community-language school.

6- Community -familiarized religious organizations

Weinreich (1974) proposed that some ethnic groups have maintained their languages because "it became a symbol of group integrity, based on the extensive emotional involvement of the speakers with the language during the period of its acquisition in childhood."(p.100). He stated that language shift takes place in certain situations, domains and with certain people. He suggested that language shift is "the change away from habitual use of one language to that of another." (p.16).

Downes (1998) stated that the domain distribution plays an important role in language maintenance, Downes assumed that:

A wide range of domains means that a wide variety of areas of life can be led in that language. Clarity of allocation, and general boundary maintenance, both linguistic and social, where there is no doubt as to which language to use, also favours maintenance. (p.62)

Empirical Studies

Dweik (1986) conducted a study on the linguistic situation among three ethnic minorities who reside in Jerusalem: the Armenians, the Assyrians and the Greeks. The researcher attempted to examine the linguistic situation of their languages after being interacted with each other (Arabic, English and Hebrew). He used interviews and questionnaires as instruments to collect data. It was concluded that various factors helped these minorities to preserve their languages.

Al-Nahar (2009) examined the mother tongue of Armenians in Jordan to find if they preserved their language or not. Al-Nahar used personal observations, interviews, and questionnaires distributed to a sample of 100 Armenians from different ages, gender, and professions. The study shed light on four areas: language background, proficiency, domains of language use, and language attitudes which have brought about the preservation of the Armenian language. The study mentioned some factors that played role in language maintenance among the Armenians of Jordan. The factors were: "Armenian home" or the customary use of the Armenian language at home by the family, the internal marriages, having their own schools, and the support by the policy of Jordanian government (allowing Armenian language use side by side with Arabic). The findings of the study confirmed that the Armenians in Jordan preserved their language, in spite of being true bilinguals in Armenian and Arabic.

Sofu (2009) investigated the language situation among some Arab families who reside in southern Turkey. The researcher gathered the information through interviews. The findings showed that the second generation began to lose some part of their language. This gradual shift came from schooling, the types of career methods this generation has chosen and the requirement to communicate with only speaking Turkish families. Although of what was mentioned above, the third generation seemed to be more interested in preserving their mother tongue. The

third generation takes the issue of maintaining their language as their way to get the recognition of their identity and Arabic and make them as a part of their heritage.

Al-Obaidi (2012) investigated the situation of language contact of Syriac language among Assyrians in Baghdad and examined the factors of maintenance and domains of their ethnic language (Syriac) in spite of a long contact with the majority language (Arabic). The researcher created a sociolinguistic questionnaire to answer the questions of the study and distributed it to 150 participants from the community. The researcher found that the Syriac language is still used among the Assyrians of Baghdad side by side by Arabic. The study showed several factors that helped use Syriac language despite a long contact with Arabic in a history. It showed that home, family and church domains supported the community to maintain their ethnic language.

Methods and Procedures

Sample

The population of the sample of the current study is Armenians who came from Armenia for political conflicts and lived in Iraq for many years. The researcher selected a sample of 50 Armenians who live in Baghdad for research purpose. The researcher distributed some of the questionnaires among worshippers at Mariyam AlAthraa Church, to school teachers and students at Al-Arman principle private school, to shop owners, traders and other members of the Armenian community. The selected sample consisted of several important demographic variousness, namely, different gender, age, educational backgrounds, profession, and marital status as illustrated at Table (A) below

Table (1) The Distribution of the Respondents' Demographic data

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Age	(20 – 29)	2	7	9
	(30 – 39)	6	9	15
	(40 – 49)	4	6	10
	(50 – 59)	4	6	10
	60 and above	3	3	6
Marital status	Single	9	11	20
	Married	7	10	17
	Widowed	2	6	8
	Divorced	0	1	1
	Business	2	0	2
	Education	1	5	6

Profession	Medical field	5	6	11
	Civil service	4	7	3
	Handcraft field	1	2	3
	Student	6		15
	No profession	4	1	5
	Other	2	3	5
Education	Primary	0	0	0
	Secondary	0	1	1
	Diploma	4	1	5
	Bachelor degree	10	18	28
	Master degree	2	3	5
	Ph. D	1	1	2
Place of residence	Armenian neighborhood	13	18	31
	Arab neighborhood	3	2	5
	Armenian-Arab mixed neighborhood	6	7	14
Social and Religious Activities	Attending (Armenian) Church services	21	28	49
	Visiting Armenian social institutions	24	18	42
	Attending Armenian celebrations	22	28	50

The Instruments of the Study

To meet the requirement of completing the research and achieve its objective the researcher designed a community profile as a technique suggested by Wölck (1972) to give a review about fundamental background information of the community under study and to construct a sociolinguistic questionnaire. The community profile is constructed by preparing a questionnaire specified for collecting data about the community. The community profile questionnaire contained different questions about the community, namely, their residential distribution, availability and number of social and religious institutions, their cultural aspects, kind and number of social and religious activities and others. The questionnaire distributed to 20 key Armenian personalities from the community for their extensive knowledge about their community to serve the researcher for the required information about the community (Butler and DePhelps, 1994). The community profile helped the researcher to gather information about different aspects of the community. It also helped construct the sociolinguistic questionnaire which is also one of the main instruments that will answer the questions of the study and give a review about the language situation of the Armenians in Baghdad.

The sociolinguistic questionnaire designed after collecting data from the community profile. The researcher made use of earlier related studies such as Fishman (1966), Dweik (1985), Al-Nahar (2009), Al-Obaidi (2012) and Al-Refaie (2013). It was

validated and credited by a panel of experts and modified before it was distributed among the sample under study.

The Community Profile

The Armenians of Baghdad favor to live in congregations and most of them settle mainly in three Armenian resident-majority areas in Baghdad (Camp Sarah, Camp Al-Gailany and Al-Ghadeer) and others dispersed in other neighborhoods (personal communication, 2018). According to a report by Logan (2010) an estimated number of Armenians in Baghdad in 2013 is nearly (12,000 or more). The Armenians of Baghdad have three main Churches in Baghdad: Mariam Al-Athraa Church (The Virgin Mary Church) in Al-Meedan district, Alqeddees Gregor Almnower Church (the Illuminati Saint Gregor Church) in Sahat Al-Tayran district and Alqeddees Creppet Church (Saint Creppet Church) in Camp Sarah district. The oldest church is Mariam Al-Athraa Church (The Virgin Mary Church) which was built in 1640 at the time of Murad, the Ottoman ruler of Baghdad; and became later one of the most visited places by many people in Baghdad (Matar, 2019). There are several social and cultural institutions which are belonged to Armenians in Baghdad such as: AlShabeeba Armenian Club, The Armenian Philanthropic Association, The Armenian Sport Club and Ohan the Martyre Club. There is one old school for Armenians in Sahat Altayran district (The Principle Armenian Private School) where Armenian language is being taught for years. They have so many religious, national, social celebrations and activities which they set up and share among families and neighbors at many Armenian social clubs and centers throughout the year. Namely: Armenian Plight Anniversary (April 24), New Year of Eastern Orthodox (January 6), Al-Qiyamah Day (first of April), The Virgin Marry Birth Day (August 8), Independent Day of Armenia (May 28) and The Cross Day (September 9).

Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

To meet the purpose of the study the researcher designed a questionnaire based on the information gained from the community profile. The questionnaire was formed dependently on the designs of the similar previous studies conducted by researchers who investigated ethnic minorities in the Arab world and the West such as Dweik (2000), Martin (2009), Kondakov (2011), Nofal (2011) and Al-Obaidy (2013). The questionnaire was validated and tested before it was administered to a sample of 50 Armenian respondents from Baghdad.

Results

Results of the First Question:

The first question of this study is "What are the domains where the Armenians of Baghdad use Armenian language?"

The results in Table (1) below present the languages that the respondents use at home and when they talk to their family members. Responses show that the overwhelming majority of the respondents, 97-98 %, use Armenian at home with their family members and relatives and only 1% use Arabic while 2-3 % use both languages.

Table (2) Language Use at Home

The language that you use when you speak	Only Armenian %	Armenian & Arabic %	Only Arabic %	Total % 100
At home with your parents	97	3	0	100
At home with your siblings	97	3	0	100
At home with your spouse	98	2	0	100
At home with your relatives	97	2	1	100

Table (2) below shows that 100 % speak Arabic with their workmates, while none of them use both languages, while nor use Armenian alone with their workmates. Also 100 % speak Arabic when they speak with their bosses, and none of them use both languages, nor use Armenian alone with their bosses. Finally, 100 % of them speak Arabic when they are at meeting at workplace, whereas none of them use both languages nor use Armenian alone in meetings.

Table (3) Language Use at Workplace

The language that you use when you speak	Only Armenian %	Armenian & Arabic %	Only Arabic %	Total % 100
At workplace with your workmates	0	0	100	100
At workplace with your boss	0	0	100	100
At workplace in meeting	0	0	100	100

Moreover, table (3) show that almost 98-96 % use only Armenian at worshipping places and religious events with their friends and families, while 3-2 % use both languages and 1 % use only Arabic in such situations.

Table (4) Language Use at Religious places and events

The language that you use when you speak	Only Armenian %	Armenian & Arabic %	Only Arabic %	Total % 100
At Church with worshippers	98	2	0	100
At church with the priests and religious men	97	3	0	100
At church with your family members and friends	97	2	1	100
With your family and friends to celebrate religious events somewhere (at church, at home, neighborhood, clubs, etc..)	96	3	1	100

Results of the question two: What are the factors that prompt the Armenians to use their ethnic language (Armenian) in Baghdad?

Results showed in Table (4) below reveal the respondents' answers to the factors that made the Armenians maintain their mother language. It is obvious that the Armenian home family help the participants to preserve their ethnic language. All the respondents agreed strongly that the first place the person learns Armenian is home. And that the church and the internal marriage among Armenians are the most significant factors that helped them preserve their ethnic language. Additionally the majority of them 78% strongly agreed that their suffering through their history had a role in preserving their ethnic language.

Table (5) factors that contribute to use Armenian language by the Armenians in Baghdad

Which factors that helped using your Armenian language in Baghdad	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
Home and Family	92	8	0	0	0
The church has a role in maintaining my language	90	10	0	0	0
The internal marriage among Armenians helps them preserve their ethnic language.	90	10	0	0	0
Availability of Armenian-majority residential Areas	89	9	1	0	0
Availability of schools that offer classes in Armenian	88	10	2	0	0
The tight relationships among the community members help maintain the ethnic language	88	12	0	0	0
The continuous suffering and displacement of Armenians through history contribute to preserve their ethnic language	78	22	0	0	0
Sharing social and religious celebrations among the Armenian community members together help preserve the Armenian language	89	11	0	0	0
Community associations and institutions play a good role in preserving the language.	80	20	0	0	0

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall results of the study show that the Armenians of Baghdad maintained their ethnic language and used them side by side with Arabic language. This outcome agrees with the third assumption of Fishman (1989), who explains the situation of languages in contact, and it comes up in a result that Armenian language is used side by side with Arabic language. It also complies with the studies of Dweik (1986), Al-Nahar (2009), Sofu (2009) and Al-Obaidi (2012).

The results reported in (Table1) about the domains of language use that the majority of the Armenians in Baghdad use Armenian to communicate with their family members, whereas none of the respondents use both languages or use only Arabic in such communications. The use of Armenian in these domains (family and home) may explain that the Armenians of Baghdad are preserving their language. On the other hand results in (Table 2) showed that the majority of participants used Armenian language in religious places and events with each other. These results match Holmes et al. (1993) who confirmed that the domain of home is considered one of significant factors in language maintenance. Besides they asserted their suggestions that religious factor has a role in preserving their ethnic language and this agrees with Schrauf (1999) that asserted religious practices which connected to native language majorly contributed to maintain ethnic language. Also the results match the results of the study of Al-Obaidi (2012) related to religious factors that are contributing to preserve the ethnic language.

On the other hand in (Table 3) results showed that Arabic language is majorly used by the Armenians in workplace settings due to the necessity of Arabic usage in such situations. The dominance of Arabic language in such settings influenced the community to use only Arabic for economic purposes. This result is in line with the study of Al-Obaidi (2012) who studied language contact of the Assyrians in Baghdad. She stated that the use of the ethnic language side by side with the language of majority in most domains, and consequently, the Assyrian community preserved their ethnic language.

Results in (Table 4) reveal that the (home and family) are the main factors that played a great role in preserving the Armenian language among Armenians of Baghdad. This result agrees with Holmes et al. (1993) and Weinreich (1974) who confirm that family and childhood language acquisition play a role in passing the ethnic language generation after generation. Also the responses of the participants confirm that the internal marriage among Armenians, availability of schools that offer classes in Armenian, sharing social and religious celebrations among the Armenian community members together, community associations and institutions all these factors help them preserve their ethnic language. These results agree with Holmes et al. (1993) and Schrauf (1999) who discuss several patterns which contribute to maintain ethnic language such as pattern of settlement of the community, pattern of religious practices, the role of schools and institutions to support using their ethnic language in the community.

The researcher recommends those who are interested in sociolinguistic studies to do more research on the Armenians in other cities of Iraq and to investigate the domains and use of their ethnic language in different settings. She also recommends to do research on the Armenian language linguistically to investigate whether if there is an impact of Arabic language lexically on the Armenian language.

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