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وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
جامعة الأنبار



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مجلة علمية فصلية محكمة
تعنى بدراسات وأبحاث اللغات وآدابها

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جامعة الأنبار_ كلية الآداب

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**Sociolinguistic Challenges in Post-Conflict Iraq: A Study of
Language Attitudes and Identity Reconstruction**
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ABSTRACT:

This study focuses on how the situation in Iraq after the conflict has influenced the attitude toward language and contributed to the development of the social and the national identity. Using a mixed-method research design, consisting of survey data (n=200) and interviews and focus group discussions that will be undertaken in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and Erbil, the study explains the perception and use of Arabic, Kurdish or English by Iraqis in their daily and institutional life. Quantitative findings indicate that Arabic has the most identity association (M = 3.50), which signifies belonging together and continuity of its culture, and English is the most prestigious (M = 3.48), which means the desire to modernize and to be in touch with the world. Kurdish has remained a powerful emblem of regional pride and ethnic pride albeit at the national level. According to qualitative results, the language in Iraq is simultaneously both a uniting and dividing factor, as language can be a vehicle of reconciliation but also the source of political and historical memories. Utilizing the Language Ideology Theory and Identity Negotiation Theory, the paper points out the ways in which the Iraqis in the post-conflict period have developed with hybrid linguistic identities which incorporate both heritage and modernity. The results are relevant to the general sociolinguistic and post-conflict research because it can be argued that the national integrity may be enhanced by means of national-level multilingual policies, and the linguistic diversity could be used to build peace.

Keywords: Language Attitudes, Identity Reconstruction, Multilingualism, Sociolinguistics, Language Ideology, Arabic, Kurdish.

التحديات الاجتماعية-اللغوية في العراق ما بعد الصراع: دراسة في اتجاهات اللغة وإعادة بناء الهوية

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المستخلص

في هذا البحث نُقدّم دراسة تحليلية لكيفية تأثير الأوضاع في العراق بعد الصراع على اتجاهات الأفراد نحو اللغة، وعلى الإسهام في تشكيل الهوية الاجتماعية والوطنية. وبالاعتماد على تصميم بحثي ذي منهجية مختلطة، يشمل بيانات استبانة (عدد المشاركين = مئتان) إلى جانب مقابلات ومجموعات نقاش مركزة تُجرى في بغداد والبصرة والموصل وأربيل، يوضّح البحث أنماط تصوّر العراقيين لاستخدام العربية أو الكردية أو الإنجليزية في حياتهم اليومية والمؤسسية. وتُظهر النتائج الكمية أن اللغة العربية تمتلك أعلى ارتباطاً بالهوية (المتوسط = ٣,٥٠)، بما يعكس شعور الانتماء ووحدة الجماعة واستمرارية الثقافة، في حين تُعدّ الإنجليزية الأكثر مكانة ورمزية مرموقة (المتوسط = ٣,٤٨)، بما يشير إلى الرغبة في

التحديث والانفتاح على العالم. أما الكردية فتبقى رمزاً قوياً للفخر الإقليمي والإثني، وإن كان تأثيرها على المستوى الوطني أقل بروزاً.

وتُبرز النتائج النوعية أن اللغة في العراق تُعدّ في آنٍ واحد عاملَ وحدة وعاملَ انقسام؛ فهي يمكن أن تكون وسيلة للمصالحة، لكنها أيضاً حاملة لذاكرة سياسية وتاريخية قد تُثير التوتر. وبالاستناد إلى نظرية أيديولوجيا اللغة ونظرية تفاوض الهوية، يُبين البحث كيف تتطور الهويات اللغوية للعراقيين في مرحلة ما بعد الصراع باتجاه هويات هجينة تجمع بين الإرث اللغوي ومتطلبات الحداثة.

وتتسم هذه النتائج بأهمية خاصة في ميدان علم اللغة الاجتماعي ودراسات ما بعد الصراع، إذ يمكن القول إن تعزيز التكامل الوطني قد يتحقق عبر تبني سياسات تعددية لغوية على المستوى الوطني، تُسهم في توظيف التنوع اللغوي كأداة لبناء السلام وترسيخ الاستقرار.

Introduction

Language is used not only as a medium of communication but also as a powerful place for creating identity, social memory and symbolic power. In societies moving out of conflict, language gains new importance as people and communities re-negotiate belonging, authority and reconciliation by making linguistic choices. Iraq is a particularly salient example of this process. Following the conflict in 2003 and the ensuing political transformations in the country, the language space in the country has changed dramatically. While the national language is still Arabic, there has been a greater rise of Kurdish in the north with political and cultural importance, and an exponential growth of English as a language related to education, modernization, and global connectivity. These shifts are indicative of more complex processes of social fragmentation and reconstruction where language use indicates not only preferences for and against communication, but also more profound attachments to identity, ideology and group belonging (Gergen, 2022).

Despite a growing scholarly interest in Middle Eastern sociolinguistics, little attention has been paid to the role of language attitudes in the reconstruction of individual and national identities of post-conflict Iraq. Existing studies have been mostly focused on language policy, multilingual education or structural dimensions of diglossia, often neglecting the symbolic, emotional and ideological dimensions of language use in everyday life. As a result, the ways in which the Iraqi themselves actively negotiate and think about identity in terms of using Arabic, as well as Kurdish and English in the aftermath of prolonged conflict, are inadequately explored.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring Iraqi language attitudes towards Arabic, Kurdish and English and analysing the extent to which these language attitudes reflect changing conceptions of identity, belonging and realignment of social groups in a post-conflict situation. Drawing on a mixed-methods research design, the research combines quantitative data from an attitudinal measure with qualitative data from narratives obtained from lived linguistic experiences to both measure trends and collect the experiences themselves. In doing so, it touches upon the ways in which language choice works as a marker of heritage, regional affiliation, resistance and aspirations towards modernity at the same time (Hansen, 2018).

The study adds to sociolinguistic and identity theory through empirical evidence from a situation that has not been well covered in post-conflict language studies. Moving away from more traditional concerns with code-switching, language maintenance and

diglossia in the descriptions of Arabic sociolinguistics, it foregrounds language attitudes as a key mechanism by which identities are remodelled in societies characterized by political instability and historical inequality. By making Iraq an object of study to understand linguistic negotiation that takes place in the aftermath of conflict, this research contributes to broader controversies about language ideology, nationalism, and sociolinguistic resilience, showing how multilingualism can bring not only a source of division, but also a potential basis on which social cohesion and peace can be built (Zakarnah & Amin, 2025).

Literature Review

Language is not merely a scheme of communication, but a social practice that is closely bound with the issues of identity, power, and ideology. It is through the study of sociolinguistics that answers are given with regard to the theoretical and empirical basis of this study regarding how language is instigated as well as displayed by social realities especially in the area of conflict and recovery. In its review of the literature, this paper brings together key theoretical points of view – incorporating into the discussion - as well as localized and Iraqi studies in order to develop a conceptual perspective of this study on language attitudes and identity reconstruction in post-conflict Iraq.

Foundational Sociolinguistic Theories

The theory of social variation formulated by Kroch (1986) made it clear that language behavior was strongly related to social class, gender and community identity. The empirical nature of the work on the variability of urban setting by Labov proved that the variations are not arbitrary but have a systematic relation to social stratification. Such a paradigm is useful in explaining the context of the dialects of the Arabic and Kurdish languages, and even more specific forms of Arabic dialects like localized use of the English language, as signals of social mobility, prestige, or even opposition in the Iraqi context.

Fishman (1997) coined the concept of language and nationalism, which focuses on the relationship between language diversity and political campaigns and ethnic identity. His contribution to multilingual societies can be used to bring a good idea of pluralism of ethnicity and language in Iraq whereby the language is frequently used as a tool of political discord or unity. The renewal of the Kurdish movement in their language and the persistence of the Arab mainstream in propagating the Arabic language as a symbol of the nation reflect the arguments by Fishman (Barrett, 2003).

The idea of symbolic power introduced by Hanks (2005) places language as the kind of capital in the order of legitimacy and authority. In the post-war Iraq, the Arabic language continues to hold institutional power as the language of state administration, with the Kurdish acquiring symbolic power in the form of regional autonomy, and the English language becoming an indicator of modernity and free movement of the people. The concept of the linguistic market introduced by Hanks (2005) is therefore a marketplace through which we can study the struggles of Iraqis to balance in between the competing ideologies of language as a social, political positioning tool.

The theory of identity and language learning by Norton (2016) introduces a dynamic aspect to the concept of language and relates language to identity negotiation instead of possession. The framework detailed by Norton emphasizes how speakers make investments on languages, which can bring them preferred social destinies. To a lot of young Iraqis, learning English is not just instrumental, but also aspirational, which means, there is a desire to overcome the local differences as well as be a part of the world.

Regional and Iraqi Sociolinguistic Studies

In the last few decades, the study of language and identity in the Arab world has tried to grow with much research focusing on topics of diglossia, code-switching as well as the linguistic ideology. Focused on the idea of Arabic identity in the Middle East, and probed the intersection of modernity and religion in using Classical and vernacular Arabic. In his article he has discussed the dynamics of language policy in multilingual societies, providing information about the fact that several post-conflict states tend to apply language planning to enhance togetherness or inhibit difference (Duncan, 2015).

Such studies have already reported the multifaceted nature of the Arabic, Kurdish, and English interaction in the Iraqi context; however, all these are in the in relation to education and policy, but none of these studies address the aspects of attitudinal and identity in the context of language use.. Very little research has explicitly covered the way of linguistic identities of citizens reshaped by the ongoing wars in Iraq or the usage of language as a mechanism of reconstruction and unification of countries (Qadir & Omar, 2023).

Identified Gaps in the Literature

Even with good contributions, there are three major gaps:

- Absence of post conflict focus: In the majority of the sociolinguistic studies done in the Middle East, the role of language as a tool of reconstruction in the post conflict period is neglected.
- Lack of empirical data: There are very few studies that involve a combination of qualitative narratives and quantitative attitudinal data in a systematic manner to learn about language-identity relationships.
- Ignorance of symbolic and emotional aspects: Studies tend to view language as policy or education instead of experience of belonging, social negotiation and experience.

This study will fill these gaps through an empirical study of the way attitudes of Iraqi towards Arabic, Kurdish and English show a change in identity formation in the Iraqi post conflict society.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework underlying this paper incorporates the theory of language ideology and the identity negotiation theory. The interaction of beliefs about language and social hierarchies, nationhood, and power is in the focus of the language ideology theory. This approach contributes to the explanation in which the Arabic language can be seen as signifying togetherness, Kurdish can signify power, and English can signify the outreach. This is supplemented by the identity negotiation theory that studies the active negotiation and changing of identities by individuals by making communicative decisions within multicultural and power-differentiated settings (Ting-Toomey, 2017).

Combining these two models will allow carrying out a multidimensional analysis on the macro-level of sociopolitical systems and the micro-level of individual identity. It is an integrated approach in the sense that it places linguistic behavior not as the response to post-conflict realities but as the process that forms a part of building the Iraqi identity.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research is based on a mixed-method design that implies the application of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to develop a complete picture of the issues of linguistic attitudes and identity reconstruction in post-conflict Iraq. The quantitative part will consist of a structured attitudinal questionnaire that will test preferences and perception related to Arabic, Kurdish and English. The qualitative part will consist of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion as the means of investigating the personal, emotional and ideological aspects of language choice. With this combination of approaches, it is possible to achieve breadth and depth, not only identifying the quantifiable patterns of change and thus the narratives of those patterns.

Participants

The participants will be selected to be representative as they are selected based on different demographic and geographic backgrounds. The sample consists of about 200 Iraqi respondents of the four major regions: Baghdad (central), Basra (south), Mosul (northwest), and Erbil (Kurdistan region). The criteria used in the selection are the age, sex, education level, and urban-rural area of residence, which reflects the complex sociolinguistic diversity of Iraq (Alshawi, 2020). The sample will consist of university students, professionals and community members, which will make it possible to compare the events involving people who belong to different social groups and belong to various generations (Jaber, 2022).

Data Collection Tools

Three primary instruments are used:

Attitudinal Questionnaire: It aims at testing how the participants rate each of the languages (Arabic, Kurdish, and English) with regards to prestige, identity affiliation, and the practicality. The responses are in the form of a 5-point Likert scale to capture finer opinions.

Focus Group Discussions: The discussions may take place in Arabic or in Kurdish and should be concerned with the interplay of language and identity, nationalism and social belonging. Every session consists of 6-8 people in order to create an open conversation.

Data Analysis Procedures

Diffusion analysis encompasses descriptive statistics comprising of frequency distributions, means, and correlation analysis to find out trends in linguistic perceptions. Thematic coding is the method the qualitative analysis uses to make meaning of the narrative and linguistic expression of the participants based on the language ideology theory and identity negotiation theory. Triangulation of methods warrants validity and reliability of the collected data as data sources and perspectives are cross-validated (Alejandro & Zhao, 2023).

Ethical Considerations

Ethics and research integrity criteria of the Anbar University Journal of Languages and Literature are followed to the letter in the study. The participation is voluntary and all participants will be given an informed consent. During the research process, anonymity and confidentiality are secured. The data are safely stored and reported in aggregated manner; sensitive details are removed so that the identity of the participants is not revealed. The

research will support the cultural sensitivity, respect, and accountability to the multilingual communities in Iraq.

Quantitative Analysis: Statistical Examination of Linguistic Attitudes

The quantitative part of the research is based on survey data based on of 200 people in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, and Erbil. The respondents rated Arabic, Kurdish, and English using the five-point Likert scale in the attributes of prestige, identity, and multilingual. The use of statistical analysis gave a systematic perspective of the trends and changes among demography based on region, age, and gender.

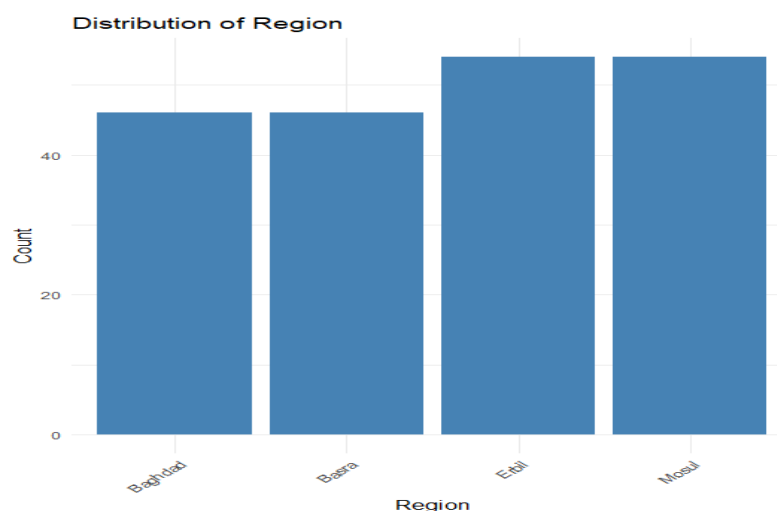


Figure 1: Distribution of Participant Region

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Statistic	Value
Arabic	Prestige	3.38
Kurdish	Prestige	2.98
English	Prestige	3.48
Arabic	Identity	3.5
Kurdish	Identity	2.915
English	Identity	3.405
Attitude	Toward	3.545
Arabic	Prestige	1.149874

Kurdish	Prestige	1.486827
English	Prestige	1.074885
Arabic	Identity	1.116347
Kurdish	Identity	1.427573
English	Identity	1.09864
Attitude	Toward	1.092678

Descriptive statistics showed that among the three the highest mean value was English prestige ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.07$) and the second element was Arabic prestige ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.15$) and the third was Kurdish prestige ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.49$). Just like identity measures, Arabic identity ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.12$) was the strongest, which supports its long-term symbolic nature as an element of national unification. Conversely, English identity ($M = 3.41$) was also found to be increasingly linked with education and the global ambitions whereas the Kurdish identity ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.43$) bore more localized identifying tendencies.

Cronbach's Alpha

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha

Scale	Cronbach_Alpha	N_Items
Prestige	0.09618	3
Identity	-0.31775	3

Attitude towards Multilingualism variable ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.09$) showed that perceptions of linguistic diversity were rather positive, which indicated a developing region where multilingualism was accepted in Iraq. The weak Alpha values ($= -0.096$ prestige; $= -0.318$ identity) of the Cronbach, however, indicated that internal consistency of prestige and identity is not high and that these two issues are multidimensional (social, political, and emotional) and not focused on attitudinal scales.

Pearson's Correlation

Table 3: Pearson's Correlation

Arabic_Prestige	Kurdish_Prestige	English_Prestige	Arabic_Identity	Kurdish_Identity	English_Identity
1	0.07	0.035	-0.114	0.026	0.156
0.007	1	0.066	-0.142	0.032	-0.017
0.035	0.066	1	0.008	0.105	0.009
-	-	0.008	1	-0.087	-0.174

0.114	0.142				
0.026	0.032	0.105	-0.087	1	-0.026
0.156	0.017	0.009	-0.174	-0.026	1
0.03	0.056	-0.04	0.089	-0.012	-0.168

Pearson's Correlation p-values**Table 4: Pearson's Correlation p-values**

Arabic_Prestige	Kurdish_Prestige	English_Prestige	Arabic_Identity	Kurdish_Identity	English_Identity	Attitude_Toward_Multilingualism
	0.9171	0.6263	0.1095	0.7158	0.0274	0.6766
0.9171		0.3547	0.0444	0.6494	0.8161	0.429
0.6263	0.3547		0.9063	0.1378	0.8991	0.5751
0.1095	0.0444	0.9063		0.2221	0.0137	0.2123
0.7158	0.6494	0.1378	0.2221		0.7148	0.8657
0.0274	0.8161	0.8991	0.0137	0.7148		0.0174
0.6766	0.429	0.5751	0.2123	0.8657	0.0174	

The correlation analysis conducted by Pearson has helped to validate weak but significant interrelationships between the variables. As an illustration, Arabic prestige was positively correlated with English identity ($r = 0.156$, $p = 0.027$), indicating that the credence to the Arabic heritage does not exclude using English as a modernity instrument. In the meantime, the modest negative identity relationship of Arabic with English identity ($r = -0.174$, $p = 0.0137$) suggested a slight conflict of identity between the traditional and global.

One-Way ANOVA: Language Attitudes by Region**Table 5: One-Way ANOVA: Language Attitudes by Region**

Variable	F _value	p _value	f1	f2	Eta_ Squared
Arabic_Prestige	0.669	0.5719		96	0.0101
Kurdish_Prestige	0.622	0.6014		96	0.0094
English_Prestige	0.308	0.8198		96	0.0047
Arabic_Identity	0.276	0.8429		96	0.0042
Kurdish_Identity	1.057	0.3687		96	0.0159

English_Identity	.455	0	.7144	0	96	69	0.00
Attitude_Toward_Multilingualism	.917	2	.0354	0	96	27	0.04

Table 6: Tukey HSD

Region_Comparison	Mean_Diff	CI_Lower	CI_Upper	Adjusted_p
Basra-Baghdad	0.34	-0.2342	0.9	0.410
Erbil-Baghdad	0.45	-0.10434	1.0	0.153
Mosul-Baghdad	0.62	0.0	1.1	0.022
Erbil-Basra	0.10	-0.45216	0.6	0.959
Mosul-Basra	0.27	-0.2855	0.8	0.582
Mosul-Erbil	0.16	-0.37052	0.7	0.852

The findings revealed that the mean around attitudes toward multilingualism exhibited significant differences only in Mosul ($F = 2.917$, $p = 0.035$) with a higher value of openness being higher in Mosul than in Baghdad (Mean Diff = 0.622, $p = 0.0227$). This difference is also possible to refer to the experience of linguistic change of Mosul during post-conflict recovery where exposures to displacement and reconstruction works have promoted linguistic flexibility. Other factors including prestige and identity among Arabic, Kurdish and English did not significantly vary by region indicating that linguistic attitudes are influenced by generational and educational factors rather than geography.

Independent Samples t-Test (Male vs. Female)

Table 7: Independent Samples t-Test (Male vs. Female)

Variable	Mean_Male	Mean_Female	t_value	df	p_value	Cohen's_d
Arabic_Prestige	3.38	3.376	-0.047	98	0.9629	-0.007
Kurdish_Prestige	2.94	3.009	0.287	97	0.7748	0.041
English_Prestige	3.47	3.485	0		0	0.

	4747	149	.068	98	.9457	01
Arabic_Identity	4848	851	.19	98	.8498	027
Kurdish_Identity	9293	99	0.14	97	.8888	0.02
English_Identity	4242	139	0.245	98	.8069	0.035
Attitude_Toward_Multilingualism	5859	95	0.522	97	.602	0.074

Table 8: Chi_Square_Result

Test	Chi_Square	df	p_val	Cramers_V
Chi-Square Test	7.32	9	0.603	0.11

Table 9: Observed_Frequencies

Region	Arabic	English	Kurdish	Mixed
Baghdad	11	8	13	14
Basra	14	15	10	7
Erbil	20	12	10	12
Mosul	17	14	12	11

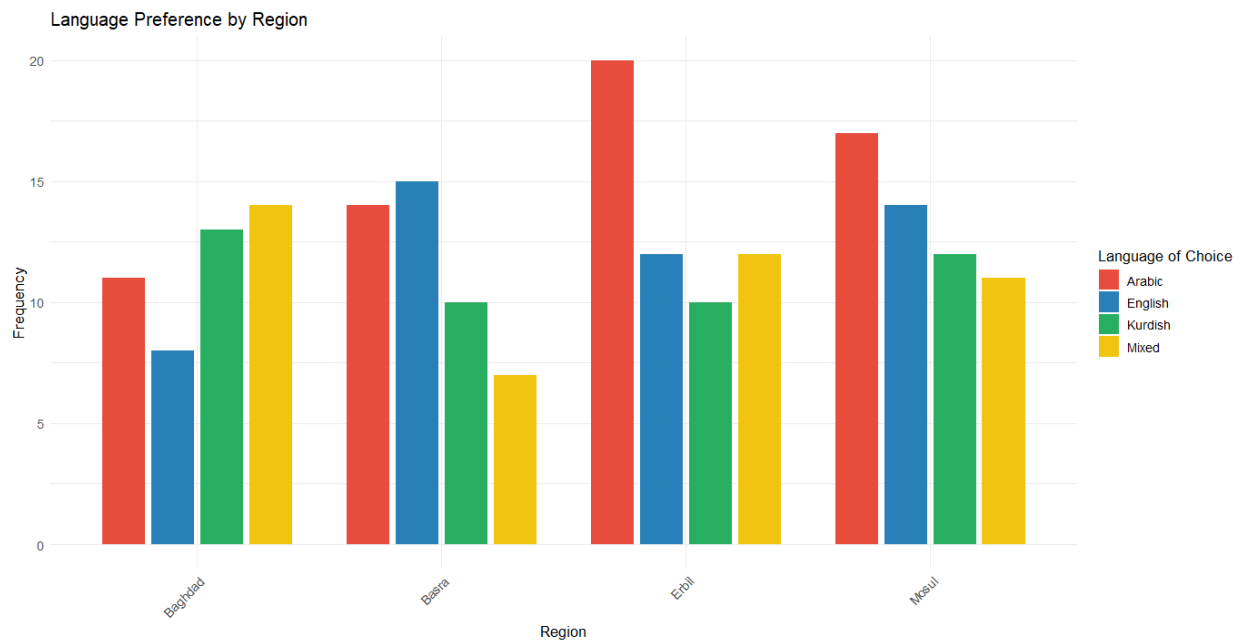


Figure 2: Language Preference by Region

Figure 2 displays the preference of language according to region. In Erbil and Mosul this is most often picked, but in Baghdad there is a relative plural majority pick of either mixed or Kurdish compared to Arabic; in Basra there is a minor plural majority pick of either English or Kurdish compared to Arabic. These distinctions are to be understood as not the genuine regional dominance of the region due to the weakness of the association between the region and the language and a statistically non-significant value ($\chi^2(9) = 7.32$, $p = 0.6039$; Cramer $V = 0.11$). The seemingly surprising trend in Erbil could be the structure of the sample of the study and the practical application of the Arabic language as lingua franca in schools, the press, and interregional communication. Future better research must employ stratified sampling and then differentiate mother tongue and functional language preference to confirm regional trend.

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic Interpretation of Linguistic Identity

The qualitative analysis served as a supplement of statistical data by interpreting the narratives provided by the participants based on interviews and focus groups on two theoretical bases, Language Ideology Theory (Wortham, (1999) and Identity Negotiation Theory (Ting-Toomey, 2017). These paradigms helped examine how Iraqis discursively constructed belonging, power, and modernity using the language they selected.

The analysis of language ideology showed the presence of three common discourses. Originally, Arabic was held as the language of the national unity and tradition, as a participant of Baghdad made it sound: it is the voice of Iraq, but it had political undertones associated with central power. In its turn, Kurdish was designed as a vessel of self-rule and ethnic pride, especially in Erbil, although it had limited national scope. Lastly, English became a symbol of transformation equated to education, progress and opportunity, and thus the urge that Iraq is willing to re-connect with the world.

Using identity negotiation theory, the interviews had shown that speakers continuously re-position themselves with respect to language context. As an example, young respondents tended to link modern identity and digital belonging to English, and older generations tended to focus on the moral and religious echo of Arabic. This

generational change is compatible with the statistics according to which more prestige attributed to English to young people and more Arabic identity to the older generations.

Integrative Interpretation

The combination of the two dimensions of analysis proves that the language attitudes in Iraq are not the cognitive critiques but the emotional and ideological bargain. Arabic is the core of the Iraqi spirit, Kurdish is local empowerment and English is attributed to being modern and liberated. The interplay of statistical and narrative data indicates a hybrid linguistic identity that is found in the post-conflict situation in Iraq, the identity that is grounded in tradition but opens up further to the linguistic pluralism in the world.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that the interaction between language, identity and national reconstruction in post-conflict Iraq is dynamic since language is a simultaneously symbol of belonging and as a source of difference. In the Iraqi case, Arabic can serve as the medium of communication within the state institutions, education, media and inter-regional communication, and this can be used to promote a feeling of national unity. Simultaneously, Kurdish (and other languages of the people) might be ethnolinguistically and regionally charged and language selection might also indicate political location, group affiliation or feelings of belonging/nonbelonging. The survey findings show that the Arabic language has the highest mean identity-association ($M = 3.50$) meaning that the participants on average possess a stronger opinion of tying Arabic to identity as compared to the other language choices we have been measuring. This does not suggest that Arabic is the sole identity language; it suggests that most of the respondents may feel that Arabic is a focal identity resource of the day to day life and the public space particularly where trans-group communication and interstate interaction are needed. Language planning in reconstruction must be able to strike a balance between the integrative and the protective and recognitive policies of Arabic and multilingual identities to mitigate the sense of marginalisation and enhance social identity. The concomitant increase in English prestige ($M = 3.48$) and positive attitudes towards multilingualism ($M = 3.55$) are also signs of a shift in sociolinguistic awareness in which Iraqi people and, in particular, younger generations are bargaining hybrid identities between the traditional and the global.

Through the problem of linguistic identity post-conflict reconstruction, language landscape in Iraq is not an exception of other multilingual societies that appeared after a conflict. The Bosnian-Herzegovina case provides an example of the utilization of the post-Yugoslav standardisation of closely related varieties (Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian) into nation-building and ethnic boundary-making, the process of which often mobilises the labels of language and script/spelling selection as a marker of political loyalty and identity distinction as opposed to a tool of social cohesion (Stojanov, 2023). Similarly, the multilingual ecology of Arabic, French, and English in Lebanon can be discussed in terms of the historical superimposition of the missionary education, French Mandate, and subsequent sociopolitical organization that solidified the various statuses and identity markers of the language use between communities (Baladi, 2018). Meanwhile, the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is opposing the emergence of the new linguistic pluralism in Iraq, which is not devoid of political tension but has more promising prospects of identity integration. Instead of disaggregating identity, multilingualism in Iraq, when done in an inclusive manner, may help the country to reconcile through establishing symbolic and communicative linkages between various people.

However, the statistics also indicate hidden disputes. The limited negative relationship between Arabic and English identity ($r = -0.174$, $p = 0.0137$) implies that there is latent ideological rivalry between the local authenticity and the global modernity. Fronting ethnic pride, Kurdish is still, regionally speaking, a prestige and influence ranker, so that minority voices may be both legitimized and their sociopolitical demarcation cemented by language, which simultaneously grants them strength and reinforces social order. Therefore, on the one hand, language is a culture-surviving tool, but, on the other hand, it also indicates eternal hierarchical postulates that provided the foundation of the Iraqi political structure.

These linguistic dynamics are largely influenced by sociopolitics. The policies of the government that insist on the seriousness of Arabic as the language of national unity provide a symbolic unity, but may alienate the non-Arab population when the government does not complement these efforts with the recognition of Kurdish identity and other languages. Also, the increased use of English language via education, media, and technology indicates the wider geopolitical orientation of Iraq and the need to be reintegrated internationally.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has found that, in the context of post-conflict Iraq, language attitudes act as reflections of the changes in society and identity renewing. As the findings have shown, even though Arabic is still strongly associated with national unity and culture, English is becoming more and more linked with modernity, education, and contact with the world. Nevertheless, Kurdish which is regionally based still embodies ethnic pride and independence.

The statistical patterns confirm this reading: Arabic received the highest rating in the identity association ($M = 3.50$), which proves its historical function as the main official language of the country, whereas the prestige of English ($M = 3.48$) and the positive attitudes to multilingualism ($M = 3.55$) express an idea of a new openness to linguistic plurality. The fact that prestige and identity variables relate relatively weakly shows that starting to use language as a tool of mobility, inclusivity and reconciliation, the Iraqis are no longer focused on defining their identity or ethnicity using language alone. In order to maintain this positive change, a number of policy and practice suggestions are offered:

- **Promote Multilingual Pacification:** National media and cultural institutions as well as the actual public must represent the multilingual Iraqi reality. Airing and publishing materials in Arabic, Kurdish and English would support social unity and socialize the linguistic differences as forces of strength instead of dividers.
- **Support Further Research:** Future research can be developed in order to facilitate the inclusivity of sociolinguistic research by steering towards diaspora groups of Iraqi people and identity transformation based on gender to assess the effect of migration and social change on language attitude and identity formation.

To sum it up, the language in Iraq is not just a communicative code, but it is a living manifesto of identity, perseverance and reconstruction. Through multilingualism as the means of national restoration, Iraq will be able to turn its diversities into the source of peace, coexistence and development.

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