

# CAN SEPARATIST ETHNONATIONALIST MOVEMENTS CREATE NEW STATES WITH INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE POLICIES? EVIDENCE FROM THE IRANIAN PLATEAU

OS ESTADOS ETNONACIONALISTAS SEPARATISTAS PODEM CRIAR POLÍTICAS  
EDUCACIONAIS MULTILÍNGUES INCLUSIVAS? EVIDÊNCIAS DO PLATÔ IRANIANO

¿PUEDEN LOS ESTADOS SEPARATISTAS ETNONACIONALISTAS CREAR POLÍTICAS  
EDUCATIVAS MULTILINGÜES INTEGRADORAS? DATOS DE LA MESETA IRANÍ

**Amir Kalan\***

McGill University

**ABSTRACT:** Ethnonationalist separatist movements' visions for new states typically include protection of their ethnic languages in smaller independent states. However, they may not be successful in nurturing their territorial languages if they engage in nation-building based on the European nation-state model because this model itself is a major cause of linguistic discrimination. The author illustrates that newly emerged ethnostates can oppress indigenous minority languages and fall short of satisfactorily addressing the language issues of immigrants because of their narrow definitions of nationhood and national identity. The author shows these states can also undermine the very ethnic language that they claim to promote. This happens by devaluing "non-standard" varieties of the ethnic language and elevating the status of English over local languages as the language of science and learning. The author concludes that investment in nation-statism will not automatically lead to the creation of an anti-discriminatory educational system that is committed to protecting linguistic diversity. This takes the extra component of engagement with anti-discriminatory governance.

**KEYWORDS:** Multilingual education. Monoglossia. Separatist movements. Mother tongue. Ethnic identity. Anti-discriminatory education

**RESUMO:** Apesar das visões dos movimentos separatistas etnonacionalistas de criar novos estados para proteger as suas línguas étnicas oprimidas em contextos de estados dominantes, entendo que alcançar uma educação multilingue inclusiva pode ser difícil, a menos que esses novos estados possam aderir fortemente a políticas educativas antidiscriminatórias. O texto ilustra como Estados-nação recém-surgidos podem oprimir as línguas minoritárias indígenas e falhar em abordar satisfatoriamente as questões

---

\* Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE) at McGill University. His work aims to create a sociology of language and literacy education that provides insights into cultural, political, and power-relational dimensions of linguistic practices. He is particularly interested in learning about the experiences of minoritized and racialized students in multicultural and multilingual contexts. He is the author of the book *Who's Afraid of Multilingual Education?* (2016), which offers critiques of monolingual educational systems. E-mail: [amir.kalan@mcgill.ca](mailto:amir.kalan@mcgill.ca).

linguísticas dos imigrantes devido às suas definições estreitas e inflexíveis de nacionalidade e de identidade nacional. O artigo também mostra que os Estados etnonacionalistas por vezes podem minar a própria língua étnica que afirmam promover. Isso acontece através da desvalorização das variações “não padronizadas” da língua étnica e da elevação do status do inglês sobre as línguas locais, por ser a língua da ciência e da aprendizagem. Conclui-se que o investimento no estatismo-nação não conduz automaticamente à criação de um sistema educativo anti-discriminatório que esteja empenhado em proteger a diversidade linguística.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Educação multilíngue. Monoglossia. Movimentos separatistas. Língua materna. Identidade étnica.

**RESUMEN:** A pesar de las visiones de los movimientos separatistas etnonacionalistas de crear nuevos estados para proteger sus lenguas étnicas oprimidas en contextos estatales dominantes, entiendo que lograr una educación multilingüe inclusiva puede ser difícil a menos que estos nuevos estados puedan adherirse firmemente a políticas educativas antidiscriminatorias. El texto ilustra cómo los Estados-nación recién surgidos pueden oprimir las lenguas minoritarias indígenas y no lograr abordar satisfactoriamente las preocupaciones lingüísticas de los inmigrantes debido a sus definiciones estrechas e inflexibles de nación e identidad nacional. El artículo también muestra que los estados etnonacionalistas a veces pueden socavar el lenguaje étnico que dicen promover. Esto sucede a través de la devaluación de las variaciones “no estándar” del idioma étnico y la elevación del estatus del inglés por encima de los idiomas locales, como idioma de la ciencia y el aprendizaje. Se concluye que la inversión en nacionalismo no conduce automáticamente a la creación de un sistema educativo antidiscriminatorio y comprometido con la protección de la diversidad lingüística.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Educación multilingüe. Monoglossia. Movimientos separatistas, lengua materna, identidad étnica

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Ethnically minoritized populations involved in separatist movements often regard their languages, which are usually oppressed within larger nation-states, as a cultural pillar of their imagined future ethnic states. This tendency is understandable because, among other strategies, modern and contemporary nation-states oppress minorities' social and political identities through a policy of monolingualism that undermines and ignores minority languages. A significant lever in this linguistic oppression is monolingual educational structures that by imposing a dominant national or official language (and in some cases, such as Switzerland and Canada, more than one official language), alienate, and over time eradicate minority languages and hence minority cultures. In this article, I try to answer the following question: Separatist, self-determination, and independence movements are often aware of harms done by official monolingualism because minorities involved in these movements have been themselves the victims of monolingual policies. In case separatist movements succeed in establishing their own states, will they be able to create inclusive educational systems that value multilingualism?

In response to this question, I argue historical evidence shows that creating a new state constructed based on modern European philosophies of nationhood can empower a single variety of the ethnic language by the promotion of that variety as the national language. However, creating an independent state by no means guarantees an inclusive mother tongue-based multilingual education that, besides the national or official language, will nurture other languages and protect different varieties of the same ethnic language. Newly established states may or may not be able to create an inclusive educational system depending on how much these states will be committed to human rights, civil liberties, democracy, and social justice. These states' interest in linguistic diversity will depend on their appreciation of the multiplicity of languages and knowledges preserved by all the communities that live in or migrate to their territories. Meaningful commitment to protecting linguistic diversity will also require the recognition of the fact that most of languages and cultures in their new states have lived longer than, and most probably will outlive, official states and their current borders.

Many self-determination and independence movements manifest a desire for inclusivity because the people involved in them have been the target of different forms of discrimination. Nevertheless, they may or may not be conscious of the fact that one major source of their linguistic oppression has been the modern European nation-state model and that establishing a new state based on the same

model, although smaller in size, might lead to creating another apparatus of cultural discrimination. Creating an independent state can help establish a national language and identity, can ease suffering imposed by an unfriendly dominant culture, and may provide economic control over territorial natural resources and local means of production and labor. However, creating a state does not automatically lead to inclusive education because the modern European state has historically displayed aggressive behavior towards linguistic diversity. Building an inclusive educational system requires an extra component: anti-discriminatory consciousness.

In order to support this argument, I draw on examples of social movements, discourses, policies, and historical events from the Iranian plateau and its surrounding Silk Roads regions—territories that have been the focus of my work in the sociology of language (Kalan, 2016, 2024). In the following sections, first, I provide an introductory explanation of the uncomfortable relationship between the European nation-state model and multilingual education. Next, I list the ways in which modern states undermine organic plurality and coexistence of cultures and languages. Describing these dynamics, I will start from more common phenomena such as the oppression of minority languages and move to recent local experiences in the Iranian plateau, Turkey, the Caucasus, and Central Asia—experiences such as silencing culture workers that can enrich languages and the growing influence of English in the region. Finally, drawing on Fishman’s (1968) observations of postcolonial states’ language policies, I show that the European formulations of the nation-state fail to preserve linguistic diversity, particularly in non-European cultures, territories, and civilizations.

## 2 THE MODERN STATE AS THE MAIN CAUSE OF TOXIC MONOGLOSSIA

In his introduction to *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*, Fishman (1999a) wrote, “The last third of the twentieth century—often referred to as a time of “ethnic revival”—has often been witness to a renewed stress on language in various mobilizations of ethnicity throughout the world” (p. 4). The current experiences in the Iranian plateau show that this trend has not ended yet and has just recently found its way into Iran and its surrounding Silk Roads regions, territories with notable multiethnic and multilingual density. For instance, over the past decade in Iran, ethnic self-determination movements have flourished in the country and attracted attention to the degree that questions about separatist desires and the possibility of the disintegration of the country take center stage in every political debate about the future of Iran. The ethnicities with larger populations such as Turkish, Kurdish, Gilak, Baloch, and Arab communities have successfully launched cultural campaigns that demonstrate the systemic discrimination against ethnic minorities in the country since the establishment of the European-style nation-state in Iran about 100 years ago, a model of governance which has aggressively targeted non-Persian minorities and their cultural identities. Some of these campaigns are part of larger self-determination movements that, as well as Iran, have impacted the surrounding regions. The Kurdish movement is stretched all over the region in Turkey, Syria, and, of course, Iraq through the autonomous Kurdistan Region. Other examples include the struggles of the Baloch in Iran and Pakistan and the Tajiks in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.

These movements manifest a variety of different agendas including self-governance, self-determination, independence, and separatism. However, a key component of all these movements is a demand for mother tongue-based education. Depending on their political agenda, minority activists might offer different solutions to the language policy issues in Iran ranging from teaching minority languages as core subjects to using ethnic languages as the main language of instruction. Within these self-determination movements, there are, also, groups that advocate for creating new states where they can be immune to discrimination. Thus, the activists in these movements proclaim membership in imagined ethnostates. These imagined future states can help them define their identities as the owners of a state rather than a racialized population within a state that belongs to a different culture. These imagined ethnostates are often described as territories free from the current oppression and thus a space that can provide effective language education in their ethnic language. It seems to be worthwhile to ask if creating new states will, in fact, nurture an inclusive educational system with anti-discriminatory language policies.

In this region, in conversations about the connection between language and ethnic identity, a semantic confusion occurs that can seriously disrupt envisioning future inclusive and anti-discriminatory educational policies for both the current states and possible emergent states. In the debate for and against mother tongue-based education, neither side creates a clear distinction between a “national/official language” and the “language of education,” including language of instruction and mother tongues as the subject of study. Based on a recognition of this distinction, in this article, I propose that to understand the dynamics of language planning in

new states, we always need to ask two separate questions: (1) Can creating a new state empower an oppressed language by turning it into a national ethnic language? And (2) would creating a new state *automatically* lead to the establishment of an inclusive anti-discriminatory educational system that can protect all varieties of the ethnic language and all other languages spoken in the country? The answer to the first question is “yes,” and the answer to the second question is “no.” Although it is possible to imagine that a new state can empower all dialects of the ethnic language and all non-ethnic languages, there is little historical evidence to show that this will happen simply because the modern European state model is itself a major cause of linguistic discrimination. “Over 6,000 languages contained within some 200 states inevitably occasion tensions because of the lack of congruence between the state, nation and linguistic community” (Williams, 2012, p. 174).

The failure of modern states to provide an inclusive language policy has long been observed and explained by influential scholars of sociology of language. Phillipson (1999) held that “virtually all states confront major challenges in the management of multilingualism” (p. 94). This failure happens because of states’ unrealistic vision of creating a national identity based on a common language: “The notion of a straight fit between a monolingual ethnic identity and the language of the state is more of a myth than a reality” (Phillipson, 1999, p. 96). Moreover, the experimental project of the modern state has no historical precedence, and thus stands against previous models by centering language in political and social governance: “The requirement to speak a common language is unique to nation-states, and a relatively recent historical phenomenon. It is unique because previous forms of political organization did not require this degree of linguistic uniformity” (May, 2012, p. 6). We should also note that the creation of nation-states is “informed by the principle of self-determination of European communities” (Safran, 1999, p. 78) with characteristics which may not match non-Western contexts, experiences, and aspirations.

It is essentially wrong to see language issues, including questions about the language of education, through the prism of nationhood (Pennycook, 2010). If we tie theorizations about language education to forming a nation-state and a national language, we typically create a toxic monoglossia that actively prevents the development of inclusive multilingual education. I use the term *toxic monoglossia* here to mean an ideology institutionalized in a centralized government that attempts to create a nation by imposing a dominant culture - best embodied in a national language - on different cultural and linguistic groups. In other words, *toxic monoglossia*, is a form of monoglossia supported by a state’s law and institutions and aggressively reinforced at the cost of damage to other languages, and hence, cultures and identities. In a nation-building project with the centrality of a common language, the selected national language devours available resources (media, the press, academia, ...) to establish a status of dominance (as the nation’s common language). At the same time, the state often uses legal means to coerce the speakers of other languages to adopt the national and official language. One significant factor in the coercive relationship between the state and minorities and their languages is monolingual educational institutions that exclude minority languages. Thus, the objective of creating a common language is often achieved by undermining other languages. This does not mean that it is impossible to create an educational system that aims to protect and make use of both the official language and minority languages. Nevertheless, such an approach needs awareness about the inherent toxic relationship between the European nation-state model and minority languages. In order to create equitable educational systems, we need to consciously work against the state’s default position of undermining minority languages and, ironically, different varieties of the official or national language. The following sections illustrate some aspects of the animosity of the European nation-state model against linguistic diversity in order to shed light on the complexities that emerging states need to deal with if they seek to create an inclusive and anti-discriminatory educational system.

### 3 MINORITY LANGUAGES IN EMERGING ETHNIC STATES

There is no historical evidence to show that multilingual education is the priority of modern nation-states, especially when the states have been created based on the idea of a common ethnicity, race, or religion. A vision of inclusive multilingualism is particularly tarnished when bringing an ethnic group together in the form of a nation is prioritized over questions about liberty, equity, justice, and human rights in the newly established state. In the West, conversations about multiculturalism and multilingualism are merely recent discourses developed to remedy the naivety of the idea of “one nation, one language.” Even with the growing presence of more progressive discourses, plans for linguistic inclusion are often treated at a theoretical and academic level and continue to fail racialized and minoritized populations in practice. The academic discourse about *plurilingualism* in Europe has been mainly about European languages and hardly about the languages of non-European populations who migrated to Europe, such as Arabic in

France or Turkish in Germany. Canadian *bilingualism* has always been about two colonial languages: English and French. The recent trend of the *translanguaging* movement in North America is similarly rooted in projects that typically studied interactions between Spanish and English, again languages of the colonizers of the Americas. Despite these trends, current Western nation-states still have not managed to provide an exemplary inclusive multilingual education model. They have merely started an academic conversation about it, with little impact on actual policy and practice.

The newly emerged states in the Silk Roads regions that surround the Iranian plateau show the same tendency to oppress, or at best ignore, minority languages. An early example is the well-discussed case of Pakistan after the partition of India in 1947. The imposition of Urdu as a national language of the newly established state created resistance in East Pakistan (currently known as Bangladesh). The resistance turned into protests that faced the violent reaction of the Pakistani police, leading to the murder of Bangali-speaking mother-tongue activists on 21 February, 1952. UNESCO adopted the date as International Mother Language Day.

Another important example to turn to is the post-Soviet independent states that used to constitute essential parts of the traditional multicultural and multilingual Silk Roads region. For instance, Azerbaijan has had a largely monolingual education policy that is often criticized because of the situation of minority languages. In Azerbaijan “at all times status-building was the main motive behind language policy programs, making them more nationalistic than pluralistic” (Garibova & Asgarova, 2009, p. 193). Decades after its independence, Azerbaijan has yet to come to terms with the reality that an inclusive educational system in that country needs to actively engage with minority languages such as Lezgian, Armenian, Talysh, Tati, Ukrainian, Georgian, and Kurdish. It is reported that:

Aliev’s [former president, 1993-2003] approach to minority issues was in essence a variant of the Soviet pattern of recognizing the importance of ethnic (p. 18) identity, but suppressing political demands for autonomy. ... The state practiced detention and prosecution of real or alleged separatists, such as Talysh and Lezgi, who were given long jail sentences for their “terrorist activities.” (Gerber, 2007, p. 18-19)

This political behavior has informed language policy in the form of allowing some legal and social coexistence of the languages, and at the same time reducing the presence of minority languages in bureaucratic and educational structures, especially in primary schools where, most experts agree (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2016), mother tongue-based education yields the best results. According to different reports (Garibova & Asgarova, 2009; Isaxanli, 2006), apart from Russian, the other languages do not enjoy a significant status in Azerbaijan’s educational system, which might mean that the country’s “linguistic variety will diminish in the future” (Gerber, 2007, p. 24).

In a similar way, the status of the Persian language in Uzbekistan, another post-Soviet independent state, has been a constant cause of concern (Kurzman, 1999), especially in the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara, which are home to large Persian-speaking populations, and which are culturally significant for Persian speakers outside the country such as the Iranians and the Afghans. “Long included among the demands of Uzbekistan’s Tajiks is that their Persian-based language be placed on equal footing with Uzbek as an official language; however, this would run contrary to the official policy of *Uzbekchiklik*, or Uzbekification” (Jarvik, 2005, p. 266).

More or less the same treatment of multilingual education is happening in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan (Liddicoat, 2019). These newly established states have faithfully copied the policies recommended by the European nation-state model: promoting a national language - instead of creating a robust multilingual education - at the cost of harming minority and indigenous languages. It is understandable that the people involved in self-determination movements would have a desire to protect and empower their languages particularly if their languages have been oppressed by larger states. Nevertheless, they should be aware that states by nature treat minority languages aggressively. Ironically, as I will explain in the following sections, states often also undermine the very national language that they attempt to promote.

#### 4 FABRICATION OF A STANDARD LANGUAGE

The oppression of minority languages usually goes hand in hand with devaluing regional, rural, informal, and oral varieties of the national or official language. “Language nationalism is a driving force in the downgrading of minority languages and *regional dialects* [emphasis added]” (Maher, 2017, p. 79). Nation-states by nature elevate one variety of the dominant population’s language, standardize it, and coercively impose it on different social groups, including populations from the dominant ethnicity who happen to use varieties of the national language that are deemed “non-standard.” “National languages ... are “almost always semi-artificial constructs” built by the state and its nationalist agenda” (Hobsbawm, 1990, p. 38). Languages do not create states; states create national languages. “The state ... makes an idiom respectable by politicizing it—by transforming a dialect into a language, as happened in the case of Czech, Slovak, Moldavian, and Afrikaans” (Phillipson, 1999, p. 84). Because there is no such thing as a “standard language,” nationalist states need to pick one variety of the dominant language as the “correct language,” which results in lowering the status of other varieties of the same language because they will be deemed as “non-standard dialects,” “creoles,” “pidgins,” “colloquial language,” and so on.

The dynamic of elevating a language/dialect to dominate others as a national language has been an integral part of European nation-states since the construction of its main models such as modern France, Germany, and Italy. Linguistic nationalism went hand in hand with the French Revolution. Weber (1976) reported the Jacobins’ vision of the Republic’s relationship with its languages as the following: “The unity of the Republic demands the unity of speech...Speech must be one, like the Republic” (p. 72). In response to this agenda, the Republic had to frame a dialect as the “French language” and present it to the public as the dominant linguistic model: “The emergence of the French language out of Latin; the various dialectical forms it took; the ascendancy of the dialect of Paris over the other dialects; [and] its standardization in the seventeenth century ... constitute the drama of the formation of France’s linguistic identity” (Gordon, 2015, p. 21).

Thus, what is known as the French language is a politicized dialect that can hardly represent other varieties of French that are grammatically, phonetically, lexically, and register-wise different (Fishman, 1999b). German nationalism also regarded a common German language, and its literary products, as the main commonality between the diverse peoples who resided in an imagined Greater German Empire, although it meant that minoritized cultures within that territory would either have to disappear or assimilate (Jansen, 2011). This tendency over years caused the dominance of Hochdeutsch (High German) as standard German. Italy also had to resort to the same strategy. Here is Antonio Gramsci’s narrative about the fabrication of a “unifying” Italian language:

Manzoni [Italian writer and member of the Italian Senate] asked himself: now that Italy is formed, how can the Italian language be created? He answered: all Italians will have to speak Tuscan, and the Italian state will have to recruit its elementary teachers in Tuscany. Tuscan will be substituted for the numerous dialects spoken in the various regions and, with Italy formed, the Italian language will be formed too. (Gramsci, 2014, p. 28)

In the Iranian plateau and its surrounding Silk Roads regions, the same European approach to creating national languages was adopted by the three states that have continually oppressed minority cultures in these regions since the beginning of the establishment of European-like modern states: Turkey, Iran, and Russia. These countries’ treatments of minority languages have not been exactly the same with Turkey executing the most destructive and close-minded approach, Russia (particularly in its Soviet period) displaying more flexibility, and Iran somewhere in between. Nevertheless, modern nation-building processes almost always dictate the same policy in terms of “non-standard” dialects: elevating the status of one variety of the dominant language as the official language and undermining the rest.

Atatürk’s Turkish Language Reform (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1995; Lewis, 1999; Tachau, 1964) sought to create a national identity of Turkishness by elevating the rural Turkish spoken in countryside dialects as opposed to, what came to be called, the “Ottoman language” used by the educated elite in the large cities, especially in Istanbul. Besides ignoring 70 other languages in the country including Kurdish, Greek, and Arminian, this program of “Turkism,” would also launch an attack on varieties of Turkish that were

deemed undesirable. As a result of this reform, most notoriously, Atatürk's academics started to “purge” the national language of all traces of Persian and Arabic influences, which for long had become part of everyday communication in that geography.

Similarly, in Iran, as a result of the Pahlavi era's modernization plans, the Persian dialect of the capital's elite, Farsi, was standardized and presented as the national language. This standardization partly happened through presenting the literary style of Persian classics as a model for writing purposes and the language of the state-run media for oral communication. Also, this standard language became the language of instruction at schools all over the country. This cultural regime, as well as the oppression of more than 70 other languages in Iran, led to the downgrading of other varieties of Persian. Similar to the French model, the use of the Persian spoken in the capital, Tehran, turned into a performance that became a symbol of modernity, and to the degree that other Persian varieties were ridiculed by the public and the media as the accents of the regions, or in Farsi: “*lahje-ye shahrestani*.”

Today's national Russian, similarly, has been the outcome of a programmatic plan in response to the creation of modern states:

By the eighteenth century, in particular, through the modernisation and secularisation efforts of Peter the Great, need was felt for a written language that would be closer to the educated spoken norm. The brilliant polymath M.V. Lomonosov, in his *Russian Grammar* (1755), set out a theory of three styles. According to this theory, there should be a high style, i.e. Church Slavonic, which would be used (in addition to religious purposes) for high poetic genres; a low style, almost purely East Slavonic (except for fully assimilated Church Slavonic features), to be used for personal correspondence and low comedy; and a middle style, to be used for lyric poetry, literary prose, and scientific treatises. This middle style, which combined features of both East Slavonic and Church Slavonic, is the style which soon came to form the basis of the modern standard language. (Comrie, 2018, p. 283)

The same language engineering, language nannying, and language policing approaches have informed much of the national language agendas of newly established states and independence movements in this region. Similar to intellectuals and policymakers involved in the Turkish Language Reform, who called the pre-modern Istanbul Turkish “the Ottoman language” and undermined it to create a new Turkish identity, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan refer to their Turkishes as Azerbaijani and Uzbek to create national distinctions between their Turkic populations. At the same time, minoritized Turks in Iran speak of their language as Turkish—as opposed to “Azari,” which is what Persian nationalists would like to call it—to connect with the larger Turkic culture outside Iran. In all these cases, political processes determine the status of a dialect in relation to nationhood more than linguistic features. Furthermore, these national language campaigns often involve manipulation of the selected ethnic dialect to live up to an imagined linguistic ideal which is perceived to be able to best represent the nation. For instance, some Iranian Turks involved in separatist movements speak about their plans to “purify” their Turkish by “cleansing” it of Farsi when they gain independence. As it is usually the case with modern states, the political elite first politicizes a certain dialect and present it as a national language; next, they artificially manipulate and transform the national language, which can disrupt the organic trajectory of the language.

One other example of these drastic changes in the Turkic cultural sphere, besides “purification,” is the abrupt changes of the Alphabet. In Turkey, for instance, the Arabic script was replaced by the Latin alphabet in 1928 and all official Turkish, almost overnight, was written in Latin letters. Not surprisingly, such a move severed the literary heritage of the country from current language use and communication. This phenomenon forced the Turks to specify resources for the intralingual translation of their own literature from one alphabet to another (Albachten Özlem, 2013; Mignon, 2010). Azerbaijan, also, in the course of joining the Soviet Union and in the later period of independence, has experienced politically driven alphabet reforms from the Arabic alphabet to, Latin, Cyrillic, and back to the current Latin form (Altstadt, 2016; Ergun, 2010; Landau, 2010). In most of the debates about replacing the Arabic alphabet in the post-Soviet Turkic countries “the Arabic script [was discussed] as a symbol of backwardness and underdevelopment” (Ergun, 2010, p. 33). This attitude towards the written trajectory of an ethnic language is rather puzzling because it degrades the history of the very language that the state tries to promote.

As these cases show, language policies based on the European nation-state model not only oppress minority languages, but they also undermine many varieties of the ethnic language as a result of the manipulative fabrication of a national language. It is reasonable that minoritized populations involved in self-determination movements feel that when their languages are existentially threatened

by a dominant culture, forming an independent state can create space for the protection and growth of their ethnic languages. Nevertheless, policymakers involved in such movements should be aware of the tendency of the European nation-state model to undermine the very ethnic language's dialects and diverse literary traditions. Bakhtin (1981), who, as a Soviet-period scholar, had closely observed the language varieties of the contexts discussed in this section, critiqued the politicized European understanding of language and warned against ignoring the importance of the natural function of language varieties within the same language:

Linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language—as forces in the service of the great centralizing tendencies of European verbal-ideological life—have sought first and foremost for unity in diversity. ... Real ideologically saturated “language consciousness,” one that participants in actual heteroglossia and multi-linguagedness, has remained outside its field of vision. It is precisely this orientation toward unity that has compelled scholars to ignore all the verbal genres (quotidian, rhetorical, artistic-prose) that were the carriers of the decentralizing tendencies in the life of a language, or that were in any case too fundamentally implicated in heteroglossia. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 274)

Language activists involved in self-determination, independence, and separatist movements should realize that the genuine protection of an ethnic language (in all its varieties) hardly happens by state-sponsored standardization of a dialect. Nurturing a language should organically occur within a social culture that recognizes heteroglossia or the necessity of the co-existence of dialects and linguistic varieties within the same language. In this sense, culture creators such as writers, artists, journalists, and academics who create texts in a variety of languages and dialects might be in a better position than the state to protect an ethnic language with its organic heteroglossia. Independent states may or may not be committed to protecting the freedom of culture workers to perform this function. As I explain in the next section, the evidence from the Iranian plateau and its surrounding regions shows that some newly established states seriously hinder the linguistic performances of culture workers.

## 5 DISRUPTION OF CULTURE WORKERS' ORGANIC ROLE IN THE PROTECTION OF LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS

As we discussed, modern states tend to police and standardize languages, and, in the process, damage society's organic linguistic diversity. This does not mean that nation-states never specify resources to protect minority languages. Fortunately, over the past decades, we have witnessed the growth of a language revitalization movement, often supported by public funding, which aims to promote endangered, and sometimes minoritized, languages (Grenoble & Whaley, 2005). Nevertheless, nation-states almost always specify more resources to national languages, and the revitalization movement is not a product of a nation-state model, but a remedy for the ills that it has created. Some revitalization plans, also, are done without proper co-ordination with Indigenous communities. An alternative to state-based protection of languages could be an attention to the role of culture workers.

Traditionally, people who organically protect languages (and dialects, accents, oral traditions, ...) and language diversity are culture workers who actively use language in their oral and textual products. Culture workers include people such as academics, writers, journalists, songwriters, singers, storytellers, preachers, elders, and so on. Culture workers can be regarded as organic language activists (Makoni & Criss, 2017). They capture languages and dialects, with all their nuanced differences, in their work. They develop their products within communities of practice that require locally agreed features, qualities, and standards for textual performances. When culture workers' texts, or other linguistic performances, receive attention and appreciation, their communities will treat these products as textual models that can inspire future linguistic practices. The role of these cultural circles is particularly important in the Iranian plateau and its surrounding Silk Roads regions with their long and rich literary and artistic traditions in different languages, which have coexisted in complex intercultural connections for a long time.

Communities of culture workers flourish when they have (a) the liberty to perform and (b) resources that allow them to record and disseminate their linguistic products. One might assume that nation-states would welcome this cultural potential to promote the nation's languages or, at least, the national language. Nevertheless, evidence from this region shows that modern states often actively, and sometimes violently, restrict civil liberties and undermine culture workers, even those who write and create in the national language. The reason for this paradoxical behavior is the fact that nation-states almost always regard language as a tool at the service of nation-building and rarely display a genuine concern for languages, including the official or national language.



In the modern states that grew out of the traditional Silk Roads regions, which used to enjoy a robust intellectual life as a major center of learning (Benjamin, 2015), there has been a regular pattern of detaining, torturing, and banishing writers, intellectuals, academics, language teachers, and similar culture workers and text creators. Almost immediately after the partition of India (1947), Saadat Hasan Manto (1912 - 1955) was publicly tried multiple times in Pakistan for producing “obscene” literature, indicating the emergence of a censorship regime that has continued so far. In another example, in Iran, the Iranian Writers' Association (IWA), since its foundation in 1968, has always been targeted as a national security threat and for the most part has functioned as an illegal underground organization. The systematic state-funded aggression against IWA has had catastrophic peaks such as the 1998 serial murders of dissident intellectuals who were associated with IWA. Turkey has also at times seriously undermined the activities of culture workers (Özatalay, 2020). “[T]ens of thousands of public dissidents and government critics have been subjected to dismissals and revocation of civic rights via emergency decrees. The victims call this process ‘civil death’” (Sertdemir Özdemir & Özyürek, 2019, p. 699).

Similar to these larger and older modern states, newly emerged states in this region, display antagonistic behavior towards writers, journalists, academics, and other culture workers whose role is crucial in preserving cultures and languages (Foroughi, 2012; Knaus, 2015; Podoprigora et al., 2019). Here are a few examples from post-Soviet independent states. In Belarus, in 2021, as reported by Amnesty International (2021), 466 university students were detained for peaceful protests. In Azerbaijan, Akram Aylisli was stripped of his People's Writer title and his presidential pension in 2013 because his novel, *Stone Dreams*, portrayed Armenians in a sympathetic light. Protests were organized in his hometown in western Azerbaijan and the protestors burned his books, “calling him “a traitor of the Azerbaijani nation”” (Amnesty International, 2013, par 1). In 2017, Pen America reported that it was “extremely concerned about the well-being of Uzbek journalist Bobomurod Abdullaev, who was detained by the National Security Services in Tashkent ... solely on the basis of his journalistic work” (Pen America, 2017, par. 1 & 2). These and other examples show that in newly established states in this region, there is a noticeable pattern of restricting freedom of the press and tribune and of punishing writers, academics, and journalists, including those who write in the official language of the state.

For a well-rounded analysis of the relationship between the state and its languages, and its consequent impact on educational policy, it is important to pay attention to the communities which organically foster languages. These communities include artistic, literary, academic, and intellectual circles that use different languages and dialects in their own contexts and at the same time modify them to best fulfill their communicative needs. If states are not committed to human rights, they can seriously hinder the organic function of culture workers, who are involved in collecting, capturing, framing, and curating diverse linguistic performances. Culture workers showcase languages, dialects, and accents, and maximize their performative and expressive potentials. Culture workers' linguistic products can often be preserved and used as cultural heritage and thus as a linguistic foundation for future generations of language users. Totalitarian states aggressively harm this potential heritage.

## 6 REPLACING A LOCAL COLONIAL LANGUAGE WITH A GLOBAL COLONIAL LANGUAGE

Language policy trends in the Iranian plateau and its surrounding regions illustrate that newly established states can, ironically, undermine the very ethnic language that they deem the foundation of their nationhood by disproportionate incorporation of European languages into their educational and academic structures. For instance, the newly emerged states in this region, often create English-based multilingual educational structures that, consciously or unconsciously, prioritize English as the language of science over the national or official language. As it is usually the case, educational materials, resources, and institutional structures needed to foster the newly determined national language can by no means match the structures which have been internationally promoting English, as a major colonial language, for a long time (Makoni et al., 2022). As such, the national languages of new states - just liberated from the oppression of a regional colonial language, which might have had organic linguistic connections with the ethnic language because of geographic proximity - are overshadowed by global colonial languages such as English.

The phenomenon of degrading the region's languages in encounters with European colonialism dates to the earlier nation-building experiences in the region. For instance, after the formation of Iran as a modern state, first French (and to a lesser degree German) and then English were promoted in the country as the language of modernity and progress. Paradoxically, the creators of Iran as a

modern nationalist state felt their project would not be complete without the presence of European languages in the intellectual sphere. The modernity project which had brought nationalism from Europe would also bring European languages with it, even if it was at the cost of devaluing the “national” language. This intellectual fascination with European languages elevated the role of the translators of these languages to dominant public intellectuals as if the Persian language and the thinkers who used the language were not able to produce knowledge worthy of serious attention. Among these translator-intellectuals are Manouchehr Bozorgmehr (translator of Bertrand Russell), Shams Adib Soltani (translator of Immanuel Kant), Bagher Parham (translator of Friedrich Hegel), Khashayar Deyhimi (translator of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus), Reza Seyed-Hosseini (translator of French literature), Babak Ahmadi (translator of continental philosophy), and Morad Farhadpour (translator of European critical theory). Another popular member of this translator-intellectual class is Daryoush Ashouri, the translator of Nietzsche. In his book *Open Language: An Inquiry into Language and Modernity* (2008), Ashouri goes as far as asserting that the Persian language is a “closed” and “inflexible” language that does not have the lexical and syntactic potential to express modern thought. Ironically, Ashouri for decades served in the state-run Academy of Persian Language and Literature, which has had the mission of regulating, promoting, and protecting the official language, Persian.

Obviously, this paradoxical behavior, with a belief in creating a national identity and, at the same time, undermining and demeaning the nation’s languages by elevating the status of global colonial languages, has damaged minority languages in Iran more than the official language because in this linguistic hierarchy, minority languages are at the very bottom. Nevertheless, surprisingly, minority activists, both during the process of independence-seeking and after establishing new states, display the same attitude towards the role of European languages. For instance, in Iran, there is a popular discourse among the activists involved in Kurdish and Turkish self-determination movements that advocates for replacing Persian, as the country’s official language, with English. These activists believe that by imposing a European language on all ethnicities, a fairer system could be created. With disregard for the dangers of the current Western academic and intellectual colonialism, they basically argue that by oppressing all languages, including Persian, and by putting all ethnicities at a disadvantage, minority populations can socially and academically progress. Ironically, these minority activists regard liberation as replacing one oppressor with another.

Fortunately, unlike post-colonial language policies in Africa and India, the newly emerged nation-states in this region have not adopted European languages as their official languages. What is alarming, however, is the common interpretation of the meaning of “multilingual education” among policymakers in these states. Dominant discourses about multilingual education in Western academia seek to establish a socially just educational system in which speakers of minority languages do not experience discrimination (Gagne et al., 2022; García & Kleyn, 2016; Kalan, 2016, 2021; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). Multilingual education policies in the newly established states in this region, however, often envision multilingual education as almost devoid of concerns for minority languages and non-dominant varieties of the national language. Instead, multilingual education is often used to mean the elevation of the status of English in the educational system in parallel with the national language. For instance, Mammadov and Mammadova (2022) express this fascination with the role of English in the future of Azerbaijan, framing what has been long called “linguistic imperialism” (Phillipson, 1992, 2008) as “multilingualism” and “plurilingualism”:

Post-imperial societies, such as Azerbaijan, tend to have a more open attitude to the realities of a global language since they feel more secure in their cultural identities. Therefore, the spread of global English creates an excellent opportunity for building multilingualism and plurilingualism in post-imperial societies. (Mammadov & Mammadova, 2022, p. 92)

The view that the English language must play a crucial role in the educational system is popular among the Azerbaijani elite, although there is awareness that this special status is bestowed on English at the expense of undermining the territory’s indigenous languages. Gerber (2007) reported that in an interview, the director of a pedagogical college in Azerbaijan urged that Talysh students needed to learn English rather than their mother tongue: “Now we focus on English language. We need English to integrate into the world. What can we do with Talysh language?” (p. 45).

In a similar manner, elsewhere in the region, the government of the independent Kurdistan Region of Iraq has reformed the educational system to incorporate English as a main foundation of the literacy curriculum (Kakabra, 2015), a move which can undermine Kurdish languages in the long run (Saeed & Jukil, 2018). The government launched this initiative, reflected in a

document called “Sunrise,” in 2007. This plan has elevated the status of English in the region’s educational structures to a level almost equal to the dominant Kurdish language. Since the project was launched, empirical research projects have yielded findings indicative of serious issues with granting this disproportionate privilege to English. Kakabra (2015) reported prevalent anxiety among students about learning English. With the sudden heavy presence of English in the classroom, “students face problems while trying to understand texts in English” (Ahmed et al., 2015, p. 377). More recently, Ali Ahmed *et al.* (2021) reported that “[...] students have negative attitudes towards learning English in terms of emotional, behavioural and cognitive aspects” (p. 72). This anxiety and negative attitude can be better understood when we read other reports from Kurdistan that warn that a test-oriented approach to teaching English, which is supposed to help quantify Kurdistan’s “progress,” has created negative washback among the students (Omar, 2020). With this status of English in the educational system, it is not surprising that Saeed (2021) warns that “the third generation in many families may lose their heritage language, i.e., Kurdish, because these families don’t positively sustain their heritage languages while they promote [English-Official Kurdish] bilingualism” (p. 231).

The promotion of English in the region is also readily visible in higher education. Welcoming large numbers of universities with American and British accreditation and a growing sector of private universities which use English as the main language of instruction has practically changed the language of instruction into English in many universities. This phenomenon has been observed in Azerbaijan (Shafiyeva & Kennedy, 2010), Georgia and Armenia (Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015), and Kurdistan (Rahman, 2020). This process, in the long run, will undermine the academic status of the national language, which, in a self-determining state, is expected to be the main medium of knowledge generation. As a result of these dynamics, instead of training experts who can discuss local issues in a language understandable for everyone in the community, the universities will create an academic elite who generate knowledge for English journals. This process will only contribute to the current academic colonialism in which scholars from the South are in an “underprivileged position in the global academic world as “case” or “data” producers for northern theory” (Ergin & Alkan, 2019, p. 260).

## 7 RIGID NATIONAL IDENTITIES AND IMMIGRANTS’ LANGUAGES

Since the establishment of modern states in the Iranian plateau and its surrounding Silk Roads regions, the countries that emerged in these territories have experienced volatility, instability, and political uncertainty. The list of crises in the region is long. Here are some examples: the Iranian Revolution (1978 – 1979), Iran–Iraq War (1980 – 1988), the Gulf War (1990 – 17 January 1991), the Tajikistani Civil War (1992 – 1997), the War in Afghanistan (2001 – 2021), the Iraq War (2003 – 2011), the Russo-Georgian War (2008), the Armenia- Azerbaijan conflict (2020), the Syrian Civil War (2011 – present), and the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine (2022). These events, and other similar developments in the region, have created significant waves of migration. Although some people escaping from these crises might have ended up in the West, the majority of the asylum seekers have moved to other countries in the region. This pattern requires the development of a strong multilingual education approach that recognizes the languages that immigrants bring with them into their host countries.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2022) reports that based on the current year’s calculations, 89.3 million people have been forcibly displaced worldwide “as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order” (par. 1). This figure is considerably larger than the population of many of the newly emerged, or potentially emerging, states in the Iranian plateau and its surrounding Silk Roads regions. In case any of these states receive migration waves of this global move, which is predicted to intensify as a result of environmental damage and climate change (Khanna, 2021), they will find that their commitment to a national identity based on an ethnic language will not help them to address the realities involved in educating immigrant populations.

The historically volatile circumstances of the region show sizable migration moves are quite likely to happen. The UNHCR report (July 18, 2022) shows that two countries in this region are among the countries that have generated the largest number of asylum seekers in the world (Syria with 6.8 million and Afghanistan with 2.7 million displaced people) and two are among the top host countries (Turkey hosting 3.8 million and Pakistan, 1.5 million). Iran, also, is currently hosting 800,000 registered refugees. In addition, it is estimated that more than two million undocumented Afghans and about 600,000 Afghan passport holders live in Iran. This population flow happens while many Iranians are leaving the country. There is little reliable data about the number of Iranian

expatriates, but there are informal estimates that more than 5 million people might have left the country since the Revolution (1978 – 1979). Many Iranians have recently relocated to the surrounding countries such as Turkey, Armenia, and Georgia.

These immigration patterns can sooner or later hit the states that independence-seeking and/or separatist movements desire to create. Welcoming these immigrants, first and foremost, requires a robust mother tongue-based multilingual education. We cannot predict the behavior of possible future states; however, there is already evidence that nationalist states fall short of satisfactorily addressing the language issues of immigrants because of their narrow and inflexible definitions of nationhood and national identity. The United Arab Emirates exemplifies the reality that the immigration patterns in this region can entirely change the make-up of the dominant population. “[W]ith an estimated population of about 10 million, the number of expatriate residents far outweighs the number of UAE nationals who constitute only about 11% of the population. ... Thus, Emiratis are a minority in their own country” (Esseili, 2020, p. 81). This demographic status can seriously challenge definitions of nationhood which are based on a single culture, language, race, or religion. Independent states should face the reality of the necessity of theorizing their identities based on an acceptance of multiple identities.

A question of language will constantly emerge when states interact with immigrant populations. We, for instance, know that the “majority of new non-Slavic refugees find it hard to overcome the language barrier and start a new life in Ukraine” (Ivaschenko-Stadnik, 2013, p. 5). Belarus has similarly had its share of asylum seekers, recently receiving applications from up to 40 countries (Shakhotska & Bobrova, 2013). “Among problems that acknowledged refugees face most often one can primarily mention issues associated with employment, housing and language learning” (Shakhotska & Bobrova, 2013, p. 4). A similar case is Israel and its treatment of Ethiopian refugees who, next to receiving discriminatory treatment because of skin color, would have to undergo traumatic experiences because of language difference. It is reported that, once in Israel, these refugees “[...] faced language difficulties, unemployment, religious and social discrimination” (Finklestein & Solomon, 2009, p. 40).

The same challenges also arise when refugees and immigrants have the same ethnic background but speak a different language or even another variety of the same language. An example of the former is Armenia and the latter, Iraqi Kurdistan. “Around 360,000 refugees arrived in Armenia beginning in 1988 soon after the anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait and outbreaks of mass violence in other towns in Azerbaijan” (Baghdasaryan, 2009, p. 7). After settling in Armenia, “they certainly were partly excluded from the labor market (mainly due to the economic crisis and restructuring and partly because of language incompetence)” (Baghdasaryan, 2009, p. 8). The author in this article explains what was perceived as “language incompetence” was failing to display linguistic performances required to create a “national identity” although the immigrants were also ethnically Armenian:

One of the major problems was that a significant number of refugees were Russian-speaking, while many locals at that time perceived using Armenian language for communication as a marker of national identity. Therefore, often Russian-speaking refugees were rebuked and requested to speak Armenian by certain layers of the local population. (Baghdasaryan, 2009, p. 8)

The Iraqi Kurdistan “[...] hosts nearly 260,000 Syrian refugees, the vast majority of whom are based in the Kurdistan Region.” (UN News, 2022, par. 2). “Most Syrian refugees [who are Syrian Kurds] in these camps tend to speak the Kurdish language, but have different dialects from the Iraqi Kurdish” (Izaddin et al., 2015, p. 3). This communication context, understandably, requires accommodation of all Kurdish languages in asylum-seeking and immigration processes.

These examples show that states that develop identity narratives portraying linguistically homogeneous populations as their point of reference should realize that not only do these national identities, as discussed previously, often fail to capture organic diversities that already exists within their societies, but also they are not able to provide a vision that can help this region address inevitable waves of immigration in a dignified way.

## 8 INVESTING IN NATION-STATISM OR ORGANIZED ANTI-DISCRIMINATION MOVEMENTS?

The themes that I have discussed so far show the inherent aggressive behavior of the modern European state model towards linguistic diversity. I tried to show that it is unrealistic to believe that the creation of a new state will automatically solve challenges involved in language policy and planning, although a new state can promote a dialect or variety of a previously minoritized language. In a nutshell, nation-statism is not capable of tackling language issues because by nature it creates them. The alternative is to create anti-discriminatory movements that demand the removal of linguistic hierarchies that reinforce oppressive socio-political hegemonies. Organizing anti-discriminatory movements can create more space for linguistic diversity both in current larger states and, in the case of independence, in newly established states.

A plan for sustaining and promoting linguistic diversity, on the basis of human rights and social justice, is a feasible vision for the communities which live in the Iranian plateau because of their successful historical experiences with multiethnic social relations, multiculturalism, and multilingualism. “Western concepts of language and ethnicity fail to capture the reality of complex, fluid, and plural cultural and linguistic identities in many postcolonial contexts, both in Asia and Africa” (May, 2012, p. 95-96). This potential has long been recognized by Western linguistic sociologists. Fishman (1968) wrote that “Western, post-Versailles intellectual heritage” has caused Western sociologists and political scientists to be “puzzled” (p. 44) when analyzing the language policy practices of post-colonial states. He explains the cause of this lack of understanding as follows:

In non-European settings ... diglossia is extremely widespread and therefore language statistics or nation-and-language typologies that slight this fact are somewhat to very misleading. On occasion, it is a traditional diglossia in which two or more languages have long-established, functionally separate roots in the same society. (Fishman, 1968, p. 45)

Many non-European territories have long been multicultural and multilingual societies which have organically promoted local cosmopolitanisms tolerant of linguistic and ethnic differences. This history is a reliable foundation for organizing anti-discriminatory campaigns that can help facilitate respect for the linguistic rights of minoritized populations. These campaigns should be led and sustained both in current larger states and, in the case of separation, in the newly established states because, as I illustrated, creating states cannot automatically solve language policy and planning issues.

Regarding a demand for multiglossia as a component of a larger anti-discrimination movement, as opposed to using language as a tool for nation-building, will also help us see that a question of linguistic rights is in direct connection with other human rights and that a demand for one can strength the other. Especially in terms of education, the same anti-discriminatory spirit that aims to sustain linguistic diversity in educational settings will also help protect the educational rights of financially disadvantaged students, girls, LGBTQ+ students, neurodiverse learners, and so on. There is no guarantee that a language education based on nation-statism will enjoy such affinity with other anti-discriminatory forms of education.

## 9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article, I do not argue against or for establishing new states. The main argument is that both larger multi-ethnic states and newly emerged or emerging states need to have mother tongue-based multilingual education policies if they want to protect their territorial linguistic repertoires, including both minority languages and “non-standard” varieties of the national or official language(s). I have also highlighted that an agenda of respecting linguistic human rights should be imagined within a larger vision of an anti-discriminatory education that not only recognizes linguistic rights but also is committed to the human rights of all marginalized populations. Creating new states based on the European nation-state model will not automatically translate into inclusive language policies. New states can protect language diversity only if there is an active reinforcement of an anti-discriminatory vision. Otherwise, newly established independent states will only harm the trajectories of languages used within their territories and their organic connections with one another.

I have tried to show that nation-states not only oppress minority languages, but they undermine the very ethnic language that they claim to promote. This happens by elevating the status of one variety of the ethnic language and devaluating the other dialects and accents. Also, if the newly established state is an authoritarian state, it will aggressively restrict the text production activities of culture workers who do not follow the state's political vision. Undermining the linguistic performance of culture workers will undermine the ethnic language because in the long run, it is culture workers who maintain communities' linguistic trajectories and not the states. Moreover, nationalistic visions for a newly established state, and a preoccupation with creating a new national identity, might direct our attention away from the rapid and widespread migration patterns that will challenge rigid ethnic identities once states receive waves of immigrants and refugees. Thus, investment in nation-statism may not, after all, protect language rights. What is required instead is organizing anti-discrimination movements, not only in education but in political structures as well.

## REFERENCES

- AHMED, H. H.; PUTEH-BEHAK, F.; SIDEK, H. M. Examining EFL secondary reading curriculum in Iraqi Kurdistan: A review. *Journal of Applied Sciences*, v. 15, n. 3, p. 377-391, 2015.
- ALBACHTEN ÖZLEM, B. Intralingual translation as 'modernization' of the language: The Turkish case. *Perspectives*, v. 21, n. 2, p. 257-71, 2013.
- ALI AHMED, S.; JABBAR OTHMAN, B.; GARDI, B., SABIR, B. Y.; BURHAN ISMAEL, N.; ABDALLA HAMZA, P. S.; SORGULI, MAHMOOD AZIZ, H.; JAMAL ALI, B.; ANWAR, G. Students' attitudes towards learning English in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, v. 6, n. 3, p. 72-87, 2021.
- ALTSTADT, A. *The Politics Of Culture In Soviet Azerbaijan, 1920-40*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. Azerbaijani writer's books burned over his controversial novel. *Amnesty International*. 2013, Feb 11. Disponível em: <https://www.rferl.org/a/azerbaijani-writer-books-burned-akram-aylisli/24898784.html> Acesso em: 22 nov. 2023.
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. Belarus: University students expelled from universities and imprisoned for peaceful protest. *Amnesty International*. 2021, May 24. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/belarus-university-students-expelled-from-universities-and-imprisoned-for-peaceful-protest/> Acesso em: 22 nov. 2023.
- AZIZ, M. A. *The Kurds of Iraq: Ethnonationalism and national identity in Iraqi Kurdistan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- BAGHDASARYAN, M. The hardships of becoming "locals": Refugees before and after the state housing program in Armenia. *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, v. 4, n. 9, p. 7-11, 2009.
- BAKHTIN, M. M. *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. University of Texas Press, 1981.
- BENJAMIN, C. G. Collective learning and the Silk Roads. In: GRININ, L. E.; KOROTAYEV, A. V. (ed.). *Evolution: From Big Bang to nanorobots*. Volgograd: Uchitel Publishing House, 2015. p. 101-110.
- BOWRING, B. The Russian language in Ukraine: Complicit in genocide, or victim of state-building. In: RYAZANOVA-CLARKE, L. (ed.). *The Russian language outside the nation*. Edinburgh University Press, 2014. p. 56-78.
- COMRIE, B. Russian. In: COMRIE, B. (Ed.), *The world's major languages*. Routledge, 2018. p. 282-297.
- DOBBINS, M.; KHACHATRYAN, S. Europeanization in the "Wild East"? Analyzing higher education governance reform in Georgia and Armenia. *Higher Education*, v. 69, n. 2, 2015. p. 189-207.

- DOĞANÇAY-AKTUNA, S. An evaluation of the Turkish language reform after 60 years. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, v. 9, n. 3, p. 221-249, 1995.
- ERGIN, M., & ALKAN, A. Academic neo-colonialism in writing practices: Geographic markers in three journals from Japan, Turkey and the US. *Geoforum*, v. 104, p. 259-266, 2019.
- ERGUN, A. Politics of Romanisation in Azerbaijan (1921–1992). *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, v. 20, n. 1, p. 33-48, 2010.
- ESSEILI, F. Civic nationalism and language-in-education policies in the United Arab Emirates. In: MCINTOSH, K. (ed.). *Applied linguistics and language teaching in the neo-nationalist era*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. p. 77-103.
- FINKLESTEIN, M.; SOLOMON, Z. Cumulative trauma, PTSD and dissociation among Ethiopian refugees in Israel. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, v. 10, n. 1, p. 38-56, 2009.
- FISHMAN, J. A. Nationality-nationalism and nation-nationism. In: FISHMAN, J. A.; FERGUSON, C. A.; GUPTA, D. (ed.). *Language problems of developing nations*. New York, Wiley, 1968. p. 39-51.
- FISHMAN, J. A. *Language and nationalism: Two Integrative Essays*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1972.
- FISHMAN, J. A. *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*. Oxford University Press, 1999a.
- FISHMAN, J. A. Sociolinguistics. In: FISHMAN, J. A. (Ed.). *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*. Oxford University Press, 1999b. p. 152–163.
- FOROUGH, P. Politics and human rights in Tajikistan: Squandered opportunities, uncertain Future. *OSCE Yearbook 2011*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012. p. 107–122.
- GAGNE, A.; KALAN, A.; HERATH, S. *Critical action research challenging neoliberal language and literacies education: Auto and duoethnographies of global experiences*. New York: Peter Lang, 2022.
- GARCÍA, O.; KLEYN, T. *Translanguaging with multilingual students*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- GARIBOVA, J.; ASGAROVA, M. Language policy and legislation in post-Soviet Azerbaijan. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, v. 33, n. 3, p. 191-217, 2009.
- GERBER, L. Minorities in Azerbaijan. The Sociolinguistic Situation of Lezgis. *CIMERA*, 2007. Disponível em: [https://cimera.org/pdf/Minorities\\_in\\_Azerbaijan.pdf](https://cimera.org/pdf/Minorities_in_Azerbaijan.pdf). Acesso em: 10 ago. 2022.
- GORDON, D. *The French language and national identity (1930-1975)*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2015.
- GRENOBLE, L. A.; WHALEY, L. J. *Saving languages: An introduction to language revitalization*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- ISAXANLI, H. *On education system in transition economy: A view from Azerbaijan*. Khazar University Press, 2006.
- IVASCHENKO-STADNIK, E. Asylum seekers and refugees in Ukraine: Recognition, social protection and integration. Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration, 2013. Disponível em: [https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/62862/Explanatory%20Notes\\_2013-99.pdf?sequence=1](https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/62862/Explanatory%20Notes_2013-99.pdf?sequence=1). Acesso em: 10 ago. 2023.

- IZADDIN, A. A.; CLAIRE, V. H.; JOHN, M. Quality of life of Syrian refugees living in camps in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. *PeerJ*, v. 2, p. 1-9, 2015.
- HOBSBAWM, E. J. *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- JARVIK, L. A. Uzbekistan: A modernizing society. *Orbis*, v. 49, n. 2, p. 261-274, 2005
- KALAN, A. *Who's afraid of multilingual education? Conversations with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Jim Cummins, Ajit Mohanty, and Stephen Bahry about the Iranian context and beyond*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2016.
- KALAN, A. *Sociocultural and power-relational dimensions of multilingual writing: Recommendations for deindustrializing writing education*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2021.
- KALAN, A. Towards a posthumanist sociomaterial conceptualization of intercultural rhetoric. *Journal of Rhetoric, Professional Communication, and Globalization*, v. 12, n. 1, p. 1-21, 2024.
- KAKABRA, K. K. English language learning anxiety among foreign language learners in Kurdistan region of Iraq: Soran University as an example. *International Journal of Education and Research*, v. 3, n. 1, p. 485-494, 2015.
- KHANNA, P. *Move: The forces uprooting us*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2021.
- KNAUS, G. Europe and Azerbaijan: The end of shame. *Journal of Democracy*, v. 26, n. 3, p. 5-18, 2015.
- KURZMAN, C. Uzbekistan: The invention of nationalism in an invented nation. *Critique: Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East*, v. 8, n. 15, p. 77-98, 1999.
- LANDAU, J. M. Alphabet reform in the six independent ex-Soviet Muslim republics. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, v. 20, n. 1, p. 25-32, 2010.
- LEWIS, G. *The Turkish language reform: A catastrophic success*. Oxford University Press, 1999.
- LIDDICOAT, A. J. Language-in-education policy in the Central Asian republics of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In: KIRKPATRICK, A.; LIDDICOAT, A. J. (ed.). *The Routledge international handbook of language education policy in Asia*. New York: Routledge, 2019. p. 452-470.
- MAHER, J. C. *Multilingualism: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- MAMMADOV, A., & MAMMADOVA, A. English in Azerbaijan: Developments and perspectives: English language education policy and practice in Azerbaijan from the early 1990s to the present day. *English Today*, v. 38, n. 2, p. 91-17, 2022.
- MAY, S. *Language and minority rights: Ethnicity, nationalism and the politics of language*. Abingdon-on-Thames: Taylor & Francis, 2012.
- MIGNON, L. The literati and the letters: A few words on the Turkish alphabet reform. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, v. 20, n. 1, p. 11-24, 2010.
- OMAR, J. A. Negative washback of 12th grade Baccalaureate English Language Exam in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. *Journal of University of Raparin*, v. 7, n. 3, p. 672-700, 2020.



- ÖZATALAY, C. Purge, exile, and resistance: Rethinking the conflict of the faculties through the case of academics for peace in Turkey. *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 2020. Disponível em: <https://journals.openedition.org/ejts/6746>. Acesso em: 10 ago. 2022.
- SAEED, M. Q. Family language policy and school language choice in Iraqi Kurdistan Region. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, v. 8, n. 3, p. 229-284, 2021.
- SAEED, M. Q.; JUKIL, A. M. The language policy in Iraqi Kurdistan Region from the perspective of Spolsky's Theories. *9th International Visible Conference on Educational Studies & Applied Linguistics*, 2018. Disponível em: <https://conferences.tiu.edu.iq/vesal/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/14.pdf> Acesso em: 122 nov. 2023.
- SAFRAN, W. Nationalism. In: FISHMAN, J. A. (ed.). *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*. Oxford University Press, 1999. p. 77-93.
- SHAFIYEVA, U.; KENNEDY, S. English as a foreign language in Azerbaijan: English teaching in the post-Soviet era. *English Today*, v. 26, n. 1, p. 9-14, 2010.
- SHAKHOTSKA, L.; BOBROVA, A. Forced migration in Belarus. *Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration*, 2013. Disponível em: [https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/62736/Explanatory%20Notes\\_2013-113.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/62736/Explanatory%20Notes_2013-113.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) Acesso em: 10 ago. 2022.
- PENNYCOOK, A. Nationalism, identity and popular culture. In: HORNBERGER, N. H.; MCKAY, S. L. (ed.). *Sociolinguistics and language education*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2010. p. 62-86.
- PHILLIPSON, R. *Linguistic imperialism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- PHILLIPSON, R. Political science. In: FISHMAN, J. A. (ed.). *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*. Oxford University Press, 1999. p. 94-108.
- PHILLIPSON, R. The linguistic imperialism of neoliberal empire. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, v. 5, n. 1, p. 1-43, 2008.
- PODOPRIGORA, R.; APAKHAYEV, N.; ZHATKANBAYEVA, A.; BAIMAKHANOVA, D.; KIM, E. P.; SARTAYEVA, K. R. Religious freedom and human rights in Kazakhstan. *Statute Law Review*, v. 40, n. 2, p. 113-127, 2019.
- RAHMAN, J. S. Is English as a medium of instruction a curse or blessing for the content lecturers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq? A case study. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, v. 25, n. 12, p. 50-56, 2020.
- SERTDEMİR ÖZDEMİR, S.; ÖZYÜREK, E. Civil and civic death in the new authoritarianisms: punishment of dissidents through juridical destruction, ethical ruin, and necropolitics in Turkey. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, v. 46, n. 5, p. 699-713, 2019.
- SKUTNABB-KANGAS, T. Mother tongue-based multilingual education: Legal frameworks, theoretical legacies and historical experiences: A conversation with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. In: KALAN, A. (ed.). *Who's afraid of multilingual education? Conversations with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Jim Cummins, Ajit Mohanty, and Stephen Bahry about the Iranian context and beyond*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2016. p. 16-61.
- SKUTNABB-KANGAS, T.; PHILLIPSON, R.; MOHANTY, A. K.; PANDA, M. *Social justice through multilingual education*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2009.

TACHAU, F. Language and politics: Turkish language reform. *The Review of Politics*, v. 26, n. 2, p. 191-204, 1964.

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (2022, June 16). The UN Refugee Agency. Disponível em: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2022.

UN NEWS (2022, May 17). *Syrian refugees in Iraq, risk losing access to basic food supplies*. United Nations. Disponível em: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1118472#:~:text=Iraq%20hosts%20nearly%20260%2C000%20Syrian,based%20in%20the%20Kurdistan%20Region>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2022.

WEBER, E. *Peasants into Frenchmen: the modernization of rural France, 1870-1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.



Received on December 17/, 2022. Accepted on March 3, 2023