

**Language Policy, Language Practices and Language Shift in Tabriz**

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A thesis

submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington  
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Victoria University of Wellington  
March 2014

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines how Azeri, a minority language with the largest number of speakers in Iran, is marginalized by de facto monolingual language policies of the state favoring Farsi, the only official language, over Azeri in the three selected domains. The research provides insights into how family language policies, i.e. attitudes, ideologies and practices in the home, are influenced by macro policies of multilingual nation-states, leading to language maintenance/shift among minority groups.

The investigation adopted and integrated a number of complementary theoretical frameworks and paradigms. An ecology of language paradigm (Haugen, 1972; Hornberger & Hult, 2008; Mühlhäusler, 1996) was used to situate the research within a broader sociopolitical, historical and economic context. The ethnolinguistic vitality model (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977), and language policy and planning (LPP) frameworks proposed by Shohamy (2006) and Lo Bianco (2005, 2008c, 2012a; 2013) were utilized to explore the complex interaction between macro level LPP activities and micro level attitudes and practices. The integrated model demonstrates how language policies implemented within state-run domains and institutions produce particular Discourses. The proposed framework further illustrates how such Discourses may influence people at the grass roots level which in turn could lead to language maintenance/shift in different communities and groups.

The data base for the study comprised two phases: the first phase involved ethnographic observations of the public sphere (linguistic landscape data), language use in the home (three case studies), and the local channel for Azeris (media data), interviews with fifty children, and authorities of ten kindergartens and preschools. A focus-group interview was also conducted in this phase to assist with designing an attitude questionnaire which was administered in the second phase to 150 parents of young children.

The empirical data suggests that family language policies among Azeris in Tabriz are constantly and increasingly influenced by monolingual policies of the state. The institutionalization and legitimization of Farsi through de facto LPP activities has resulted in formation of uncommitted, if not negative, attitudes among Azeri parents regarding their ethnic language. The analysis shows how a Farsi-only education system cajoles kindergarten principals into favoring Farsi over Azeri, leading them to suggest that parents and children speak Farsi in the home to ease their integration into the education system.

The linguistic landscape data demonstrates the absence of Azeri both in top-down governmental and private individual signage indicating its low status compared to Farsi and English, the two prevalent languages in public signage in Tabriz. Exploring the broadcasting media suggests Azeris' inclination towards Farsi, and then in a second place, Turkish channels. As a result, having attracted only one percent of Azeri audience, the only available channel provided by the government for Azeris, Sahand TV, provides arguably no institutional support for Azeri. The findings suggest that although family members may be viewed as free agents to choose a particular language to speak in the home, in reality such choices are highly constrained by the ecology surrounding the home which is shaped by LPP decisions and activities.

Overall, this thesis sheds light on the complex nature of language policy and planning in multilingual nation-states, and how they impact on language maintenance/shift processes among minority groups, whilst also illuminating how language ecologies are manipulated by nation-states to achieve particular non-linguistic goals.

## Acknowledgements

I find writing these acknowledgments very joyful as I look back and remember those wonderful people who helped and supported me along this long but beautiful and fulfilling experience.

My grateful thanks firstly go to my parents and two brothers for their unending love, encouragement, and support without which I could not have undertaken PhD, let alone completed it. I shall never forget my father's interest to know about my research findings concerning language change in Tabriz!

I'm also grateful for the help and encouragement I have received from my past colleagues at Azerbaijan Shahid Madani University and Iran Language Institute, as well as my present colleagues and friends at Victoria University. I wish to thank both academic and administrative staff in the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies as well whose continuous support made this PhD possible. In the realm of statistics, I received invaluable advice from Dalice Sim, Peter Gu, and Mohsen Joshanloo. Without their advice and guidance, the quantitative strand of this PhD would not have been possible. My thanks are also due to Victoria Doctoral Scholarship and Faculty Research Grants which enabled me to conduct my research and present my findings at different conferences without financial concerns.

I should also like to thank those who assisted me with collecting data for this PhD research. I'd like to thank Mahya Alaei who helped with piloting my interview questions in Tabriz while I was in New Zealand. I would also like to express my thanks to all those parents and children, as well as preschools and kindergartens authorities, especially Hossein Razavi and Rahim Farzaee, whose tremendous help and participation in the research enabled me to collect the data for my research.

Lastly but surely not least, I would like to extend my greatest heartfelt gratitude to my dearest supervisors, Professor Janet Holmes and Dr Meredith Marra, for their invaluable support, insights into critical thinking, flexibility and accessibility. Their continuous encouragement and inspirations stimulated my ever-increasing enthusiasm in sociolinguistics. I learned tremendously from not only their academic knowledge and expertise but also their attitudes and manners in everyday life. Without Janet and Meredith, I could not have completed my PhD thesis.

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## Abbreviations

<b>IRIB</b>	Islamic Republic of Iran's Broadcasting
<b>LL</b>	Linguistic landscapes
<b>LPP</b>	Language policy and planning



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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **A personal anecdote:**

*Before I commenced my PhD in 2010, I used to teach English in my hometown, Tabriz in Iran, in which people speak Azeri<sup>1</sup> (a Turkic language), a language quite different from Farsi, the official language of the country which is an Iranian language of Indo-European origin. In the English institute in which I worked, a pre-final test was given to children to prepare them for the final test. Pre-final tests were to be corrected in that session, and papers were to be returned to children so that they could improve their weaknesses at home. In one of the classes in 2008, I told the students their grades in their mother tongue, i.e. Azeri. To my astonishment, I was asked to repeat the scores in Farsi by some students because they did not understand their grades in Azeri, i.e. numbers between 0-100. I probed into the issue by asking those students about their hometown and their first language (mother tongue). I found out that those students were from Tabriz and their first language was Azeri. This made me wonder why they had difficulty understanding simple lexicon in their own language. As an MA student majoring in applied linguistics, I decided to undertake a pilot study for my sociolinguistics course to investigate on a larger scale the language attrition that I had observed. I devised a questionnaire with fifty words selected from the children's immediate environment including some numbers, colors, animals, body parts, etc. Two hundred children, aged 10-14, and two hundred adults, aged 15 and over, were asked to write the Azeri equivalent for each Farsi word on the questionnaire. The findings of the study, i.e. adults answering about 95%, and children 65% of correct answers, sounded a warning bell to me that language attrition had already begun. The attrition and shifting to Farsi provoked several questions in my mind; why are Azeri children not learning their own language? What are the possible influencing factors? Why is no one noticing or caring about it? What will happen to the language if this trend goes on? To find answers to my questions, I decided to begin my sociolinguistic journey with a focus on the interplay between language policy and planning and language maintenance and shift.*

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<sup>1</sup> The language is also known as *Torki* inside Iran. However, Azeri is used in this thesis to refer to this language because Azeri (and sometimes Azerbaijani) is commonly used in the research literature to refer to the language.

## 1.0 Aim

Language shift and its final stage, i.e. language endangerment and death, is an unsettling issue in the world. Defining "moribund languages" as those which are not learned as mother tongues by children, Krauss (1992) estimated that up to fifty percent of the world's languages might already fit this category. He further predicted that only ten percent of languages seemed safe in the long term, while the remainder were in danger of becoming moribund or even extinct by the end of this century. Although Krauss's (1992) estimations and predictions are critiqued as too dire and pessimistic after two decades (Simons & Lewis, 2011), research findings demonstrate that linguistic diversity has declined twenty percent globally over the period 1970-2005 (Harmon & Loh, 2010). Iran as a multilingual and multi-ethnic country is no exception. Referring to the history of language death in Iran, in particular as the focus of my research, Moseley (2007) writes that "older stages of Iranian languages, such as Avestan, Old and Middle Persian, Pehlevi, Parthian, Sogdian, Chorasmian, Bactrian, Sarmatian and Khotanese, have gone extinct or have effectively been superseded by later stages of Iranian" (p. 315). It is commonly believed that the decline in linguistic diversity, or in other words language loss, reflects larger-scale socioeconomic, cultural, historical, and political processes influencing communities and their languages within multilingual nation-states (Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

This thesis explores the importance and complexity of language maintenance/shift processes, as well as how those processes are affected by language policy and planning (LPP) of multilingual nation-states. Using the case of Azeri in Iran, this study examines the three aspects of language policy proposed by Spolsky, i.e. language management, language practices and language beliefs (Spolsky, 2004), in relation to language maintenance/shift within a multilingual nation-state. The research analyzes how the ecology within which Azeri is being transmitted to the next generation has been affected by LPP activities, and how Azeris are responding to those policies.

This chapter begins with a historical description of the research setting, illuminating how Farsi has become the official language of the country. Information about the positions of languages in Iran is then provided. Taking social, political, economic, religious, demographic, educational and cultural factors into account in any sociolinguistic research is significant since these factors make up "the full ecology of human life" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 1). The second part of the chapter outlines the theoretical frameworks

used in this thesis to examine the interplay between language policy of a nation-state and language maintenance among minorities. The concept of language policy used in this research as well as the broad research question of the thesis is introduced. Part three provides a broad overview of this thesis by briefly summarizing each chapter.

## **1.1 Research setting**

This section explores the research setting. The first part presents a historical and sociopolitical account of how Farsi has become the official language of Iran, illuminating the impact of such sociopolitical and historical processes on minority languages. The second section provides a brief description of the city of Tabriz where this research was undertaken, rationalizing why Tabriz, rather than other Azeri-speaking cities, was chosen to conduct this study.

### **1.1.1 Iran: A historical account**

Iran, officially the Islamic Republic of Iran, formerly known as Persia, is a multilingual and multi-ethnic country situated in central Eurasia and Western Asia with an area of 628000 square miles (1,648,000 sq. km), making it the sixteenth largest country in the world (Daniel, 2001; Nercissians, 2001). Its population is approximately eighty million with a literacy rate of 77 percent who can read and write the official language of the country, i.e. Farsi (also known as Persian) (CIA, estimate 2013). The country is comprised of minorities like Azeris, Kurds, Gilakis, Baluchis, and Turkmen who speak a language different from the official language, and who make up nearly half of the population of Iran (Axworthy, 2008). The ethnic groups residing in Iran are Persian (51 percent), Azeri (24 percent), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8 percent), Kurd (7 percent), Arab (3 percent), Lur (2 percent), Baluch (2 percent), Turkmen (2 percent), and other groups (Tohidi, 2009) (see the linguistic map below<sup>2</sup>). All of Iran's sixty eight regional and minority languages (c.f. Ethnologue), with a special attention to Farsi, the official language (see Sadeghi, 2001), and Arabic as a liturgical language are now officially recognized (Spolsky, 2004, pp. 144, 174).

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that there is a slight discrepancy between statistics stated by Tohidi (2009) and statistics shown on the map.

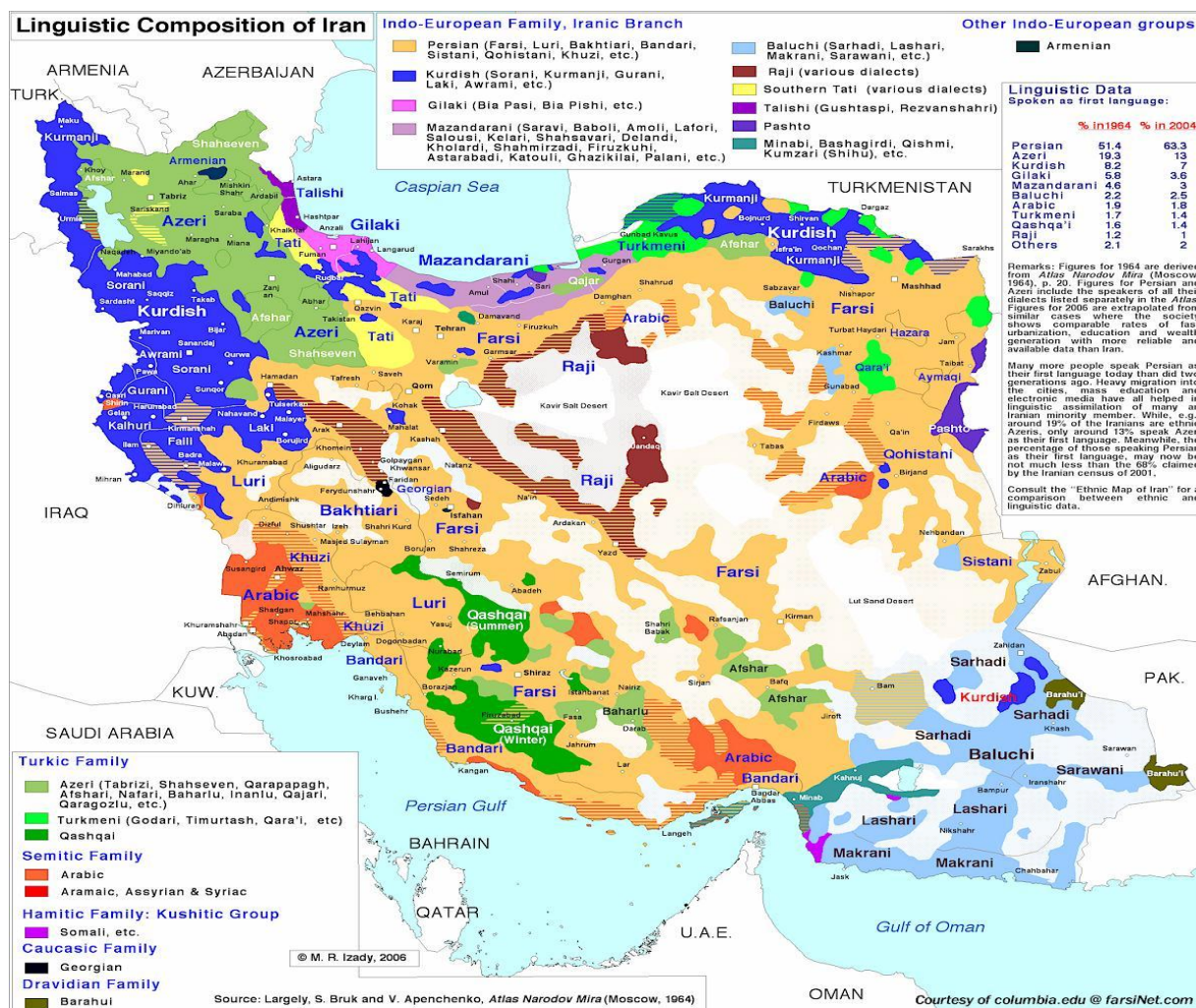


Figure 1.1: Linguistic map of Iran

Special and systematic attention to Farsi began in Iran when fear of European colonization, experienced in India where Persian served as the official language until the 1830s, was felt inside Iran (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). The British government's abolition of Persian as the official language of India in 1834 led to a desire for neologism, lexicography, the writing of grammar texts, and other Persian purist movements inside Iran (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). The rise of a Persian print culture in the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century governmentalization of everyday life resulted in publications of dictionaries, as well as restyling the language, i.e. simplifying and de-Arabizing the Persian language (Kia, 1998; Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). Finally, the first Constitution of Iran in 1906 declared Persian as the official language of the country, prescribing that all members of the parliament "had to possess the ability to speak Persian, read and write Persian, and be Iranian subjects of Iranian extraction" (see Kia, 1998). A supplementary law was added in 1907 mandating that compulsory instruction in Persian should be regulated by Ministry of Science and Arts

(Kia, 1998, p. 32). However, as Sheyholislami (2012) writes, the policy was not implemented until a more centralized government in Tehran was established.

The nationalist and purist movements succeeded to a large extent by transforming language and history into ideological tools to present Iran as one state with one language (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). However, what was overlooked in these movements was the multi-ethnic identities and multilingual nature of the country; Iran was not only Persia or Persian. It was "only by denying the existence of non-Persian identities [that] this nationalist discourse [could] present Iran as an ancient and unified nation with one history, one culture, and one literary language" (Kia, 1998, p. 9). The denial and neglect turned into intolerance during Reza Shah and his son's monarchy (1925-1979) (Sheyholislami, 2012).

Reza Shah (originally Reza Khan, 1878-1944, the founder of Pahlavi dynasty) was an officer who seized power in 1921 in Tehran through a coup, and made himself Shah of Iran with the support of the British government in 1925. Adopting *Pahlavi*, the name of the middle Persian language, and renaming the country from Persia to Iran in 1934, presumably meaning "the birthplace of Aryan race" (Asgharzadeh, 2007), Reza Shah showed his nationalistic longing by using the Persian language as a tool. His regime was characterized by modernization, provision of infrastructures, secularization, and determination to build a modern nation-state (Sheyholislami, 2012). What was evident was his awareness of the role of language as a nation-building tool (see Hassanpour, Sheyholislami, & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012; Sheyholislami, 2012). In 1924 a year before he seized the throne of Iran, Reza Khan ordered the ministry of war to form a committee to create new Persian equivalents for European and Turkish words used in the army. He formed a second committee in the army after a year when he became the Shah of Iran, asking the members to translate the widely-used European and Turkish words into Persian. Between 1921 and 1925, the army in fact became the first institution to modernize and purify Persian (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). In line with the Shah's measures, the Teachers' Training College of Tehran established a society in 1932 to create new words and terminologies resulting in close to 3000 new words, 400 of which were applied in text books. The linguistic endeavors finally led to the formation of Iranian Academy in 1935 whose principles were closely related to Académie Française (Axworthy, 2008; Daniel, 2001; Kia, 1998, pp. 20-22; Sheyholislami, 2012).

Alongside his language purification and modernization activities, and soon after Reza Shah centralized his authority in Tehran, he terminated the semi-autonomous status

of regions such as Azerbaijan, Arabistan (Khuzistan), Luristan, and Kurdistan. Using non-Persian languages in any form of writing was prohibited and Farsi was legitimized as the only Iranian language. Other ethnic languages were repressed either by "dialectalising" languages, i.e. labeling languages as an 'imperfect dialect' of Farsi such as Kurdish and Luri, or "minoritising" non-Indo European languages such as Turkic languages, i.e. Azeri, and Arabic (see May, 2008b, for dialectalising and minoritising). All the ethnic languages were required "to be assimilated to "the superior Aryan/Persian race and culture," and if they did not acknowledge the "superiority of Aryan/Persian race," they would then become subjected to humiliation, marginalization, and exclusion" (Asgharzadeh, 2007, p. 87). Farsi was elevated as the 'national language' to unify all Iranians and present Iran as one nation with one language.

Reza Shah's son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1919-1980) came to power during World War II after an Anglo-Soviet invasion which forced Raza Shah's abdication in 1941. Like his father, Mohammad Reza Shah followed nationalistic and purist goals denying non-Persian ethnic minority groups' rights. It was during his reign that severe linguistic genocide took place. As Asgharzadeh reports, after approximately being an autonomous, but not a separatist, region for a year, Azerbaijan, and then Kurdistan, was invaded by Pahlavi's army, killing many people in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. Finally, Azerbaijan collapsed after a period of resistance. Shortly after the fall of the autonomous regions, "book-burning ceremonies became a source of celebration and entertainment for the members of the dominant group and their invading army." Ultimately, the young Mohammad Reza Shah was admired as the hero of "Azerbaijan Crisis" and "the Bringer of Azerbaijan to the Bosom of the Mother Land" (Asgharzadeh, 2007, pp. 101, 102)<sup>3</sup>. The Pahlavi dynasty ended when Mohammad Reza Shah was dethroned in the Islamic revolution in 1979.

May (2008a, p. 7) argues that nation-states today are under pressures from above and below to respect language rights of their minority groups. From above, nation-states under pressures of "multinational corporations and supranational political organizations along with the rise of globalization, nation-states are required to "reevaluate their political

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth mentioning here that there are ongoing debates and doubts about the true nature and intentions of the autonomous regional governments as well as the truth of historical accounts of events in the 1950s in Iran. While some believe the governments were not separatists others argue that their ultimate intention was the disintegration from Iran. In this thesis, I focus on the historical impact of events on the fate of languages. The summary of event in the 1950s presented here is necessarily simplistic but aims to provide the historical context for the research.



and economic sovereignty." From below, minority languages within nation-states are pressuring nation-states to exert their right to either build their own nation-states or for greater representation within the existing nation-state (also see Williams, 2012). Following this global trend perhaps, the linguistic situation for minorities in Iran can be said to have been mitigated after the revolution in 1979. Language rights of ethnic minority groups are 'tolerated' if not 'promoted' (see May, 2011). Currently, according to the Article 15 of the Iranian Constitution, all minority languages in Iran are officially recognized. Minorities and their languages are "allowed" to enjoy institutional support such as teaching minority languages in the education system, having them in the mass media, etc. Nonetheless, owing to the lack of proactive policies obliging protection of minority languages, rather than merely relying on granting permission, minority languages in Iran can be arguably claimed to be threatened. Unlike the period during the Pahlavi dynasty where minorities were *forced* to assimilate into the mainstream Persian culture, it seems that they are now covertly *'persuaded'* to join the mainstream Persian culture through a variety of mechanisms.

The highly centralized education system where all teaching materials are in Farsi appears to be one strong assimilatory tool. Minority and regional languages are neither taught nor tested in the educational institutions. Given the role of education systems in shaping particular de facto policies (Shohamy, 2008), such policies towards minority languages in the education system in Iran needs to be taken into account. In the same way, the highly centralized media funded and controlled by the central government is yet another assimilatory and unifying tool (although, in the last fifteen years, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has established provincial channels which broadcast programs in regional and minority languages). The airtime for programs in the regional language, and Farsi if any, varies from channel to channel. These channels can be said to be some institutional support that minority languages currently receive from the government. Yet, their impact on the ecology of minority languages should be carefully examined. Another domain where minority languages in Iran seem to be overwhelmed by Farsi is linguistic landscapes, i.e. language in public signage, which is closely related to educational policies and literacy in minority languages (Shiohata, 2012). Linguistic landscapes offer space for minority languages to appear in public which can have major implications for the status of languages. Obviously, this primarily requires literacy in those minority languages. The interrelation between literacy in Azeri and its presence/absence in the linguistic landscapes of Tabriz as well as the symbolic presence of other languages in this domain is also

examined in this thesis. The investigation sheds light on the language policies associated with language use in public, and explores to what extent Azeri people use their language in a written domain like linguistic landscape.

This thesis explores de facto language policies within these three domains, the education system, linguistic landscapes, and broadcast media. Grass roots language attitudes and practices are then examined to illuminate the extent to which they are affected by state's language policies implemented in those domains.

### **1.1.2 Tabriz: An important city for Azeris in Iran**

Tabriz is the center of one of the thirty one provinces of Iran, i.e. the province of East Azerbaijan - contiguous with, but not to be confused with, the new republic of Azerbaijan to the north. The city has been always considered a politically, economically and historically important city in Iran. As Daniel (2001, p. 8) puts it, "Tabriz, a former capital and center of the province of Azerbaijan, has often been second only to Tehran, the present capital, in importance." Tabriz is considered to be one of the oldest cities in Iran or even in the world (Fisher, 1968), with a population of approximately 2 million people. According to Fisher (1986), the city may date from early Sasanid times (c. third or fourth century A.D.) or, more likely, from the seventh century A.D.

Azeri in Tabriz has been chosen to investigate the interplay between language maintenance/shift and language policy processes for demographic and sociopolitical reasons. Azeri is the largest minority group in Iran. There are at least thirteen million Azeri speakers living in Iran, that is, almost one fifth of the whole population, making them the largest ethnic minority group after Farsis (Persians). Azeris live mostly in the northwest cities and towns of the country with Tabriz as the main city (Boeschoten, 1998). The fate of Azeri can have implications for, and potentially an impact on, other smaller minority languages in Iran.

Tabriz can be considered the most important city where Azeri can be maintained because of its sociopolitical position. Historically, the city has functioned as the capital of Iran (Fisher, 1968), and an autonomous region for a short period when Azeris adopted a plethora of modern developments earlier than the rest of the country. (Asgharzadeh, 2007; Atabaki, 2000). The city is consequently renowned as the City of Firsts (Hawes & Mirvahedi, 2013). Azeris in Tabriz have been sensitive to their regional identity which can be of great significance in language contact situations. Therefore, whatever occurs in

Tabriz is likely to impact on other Azeri-speaking communities in other parts of the country. The dynamics of language policy with respect to Azeri in this city is thus of paramount importance (Daniel, 2001, p. 7).

Against this backdrop, this research both describes and explains the linguistic situation in Tabriz by examining language policies in the domains of education, linguistic landscape, broadcast media, and home. To do so, a number of theoretical frameworks have been utilized. The following section briefly discusses the theoretical frameworks and paradigms used in the thesis.

## **1.2 Theoretical frameworks**

This thesis explores three complex issues, namely language maintenance/shift processes, language policies and planning in multilingual states, and the interplay between the two. Given the presence of around 7000 languages in 200 nation-states, and the official recognition and institutionalization of only 200-300 languages by nation-states, language shift is predicted to take place at an alarming speed in near future resulting in vast loss of world languages. This has led some to predict that only 300-600 languages will survive in the long term (see May, 2008a, pp. 2-3). Examination of states' language policies with a focus on their impact on language maintenance/shift processes among minority groups can illuminate how some languages are maintained while others are lost.

Language shift is a process whereby a speech community begins learning one or more languages at the cost of its own language, which is often an ethnic and heritage language. The main reason for language shift and/or language loss is commonly believed to be the intergenerational discontinuity of languages in the domain of home (Fishman, 1991; 2001; Manley, 2008; Suslak, 2009), i.e. when the next (younger) generation does not acquire the language. The domain of home is seen as the most important site in which a language is maintained because it is the first site where children encounter their first linguistic experience. Positive attitudes towards a language in the home can be arguably a major contributing factor to, if not guarantee, the vitality of a language. By contrast, negative attitudes may be a prime cause of intergenerational discontinuity of a language (Baker, 2006).

Fishman is perhaps the most prominent figure who has argued that language maintenance or reversing language shift cannot take place unless face-to-face micro-level interactions in a language within the domain of home and neighborhood are realized. He concludes that language policies in the macro domains of education, media and other

institutions should not be taken as a sign and a contributing factor to the vitality of a language per se (Fishman, 1991).

Despite Fishman's persuasive argument regarding the importance of the home domain, a glance at nation-states across the globe implies a strong link between macro domains and home. That is, languages which are dominantly used in macro domains of education, media, public sphere, etc. and officially supported by the state tend to be safe with healthy intergenerational transmission in the domain of home, perhaps with a few exceptions such as Irish (e.g. see Lo Bianco, 2012a; O'Connell, 2007; Ó hIfearnáin, 2010; Watson, 1996). In fact, it is the sociopolitical and economic dominance of some groups over others that is often cited for marginalized and dominated communities' inclination to shift to dominant languages (Grenoble, 2011; Sallabank, 2012). In the modern era, language shift is said to happen, often through transitional bilingualism, when speakers of a language decide to stop speaking their own tongue in favor of a politically and/or economically dominant neighboring language (Grenoble, 2011). In other words, family language policy dynamics which can lead to language maintenance/shift do not occur in a vacuum. Rather, such dynamics are under constant pressure from policies implemented within macro domains. Given the sociopolitical and economic dominance of certain groups in the wider society, family language policy is often influenced by the ecology surrounding home. It is therefore argued that family language policy in the home is not always "consciously planned," but rather has essentially been "predetermined by history and circumstances beyond the family's control" (Caldas, 2012, p. 351). This ecology surrounding the home clearly influences family language policies. In Spolsky's words, "each domain has its own policy, with some features managed internally and others under the influence of forces external to the domain," and "language management in the family is partly under the control of family members, but its goals are regularly influenced by the outside community" (Spolsky, 2009, p. 4). In this sense, as Pakir (2003) puts it, family language policy is "invisible." It is perhaps why some have concluded that "all meaningful language policy is ultimately played out in the home," and policies can be said to have succeeded if favorable attitudes and perceptions about the use of the dominant language in the home are formed (e.g. Caldas, 2012, p. 351).

One of the major factors influencing ecologies of languages today is believed to be nation-states' language policy and planning activities. Unlike the traditional definition of language policy and planning (LPP) predominantly engaged with seemingly non-political activities of "preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance

of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community" (Haugen, 1959, p. 8), modern LPP activities are defined as those political processes which involve "intervening in the linguistic ecologies of a society with the aim of influencing its future linguistic practices" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 2). Hence, it is argued that ecolinguistic situations can be modified by "the actions of the state power such as the choice of linguistic polices, schooling, literacy, the media, etc." (Calvet, 2006, p. 46). This necessitates that language maintenance/shift processes be explored in relation to the impact of language policies on language ecologies.

Despite recent theoretical developments within the field of language policy and planning (e.g. Lo Bianco, 2005; Mühlhäusler, 2000; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004), a comprehensive model has not been developed to investigate language maintenance/shift processes, language policy and planning activities, and the interplay between the two. The research accordingly integrates a number of theoretical frameworks as, firstly, a more thorough and rich way to understand how policy works within multilingual nation-states which may result in language shift among some groups, and secondly, as a response to a widely recognized criticism of the LPP field, i.e. a lack of an overarching theory for LPP (Cooper, 1989; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Ricento, 2006). The model contributes to the understanding of how policies can shape certain attitudes, ideologies and behavior among people at the grass roots level leading to their preference for some languages over others.

The ecology of language (e.g. Haugen, 1972; Hornberger & Hult, 2008; Mühlhäusler, 1992) is the overarching paradigm used here to emphasize the fact that (a) languages and language-related issues do not take place in a vacuum; (b) languages need a supportive ecology to survive, and (c) languages and their speakers can be manipulated through the manipulation of their ecology by LPP decisions and processes. Frameworks proposed by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) and Shohamy (2006) are used to explore how and through what mechanisms LPP works to manipulate the ecology of a language. Integrating the models proposed by Giles et al. and Shohamy illuminates the political nature of domains and institutions and helps us explore who controls LPP devices, for what purposes, and why. That is, depending on who uses macro institutions and domains, for what purposes, and why, the same institutions and domains can function, and therefore be considered, as either institutional support promoting minority languages, or LPP mechanisms serving as assimilative tools. The inclusion of these questions in the analysis stresses the political nature of language planning and policy.

In an attempt to build an overarching framework, Lo Bianco's "policy as text, discourse, performance" model (2005, 2008c, 2012a) is adopted to include a discursive dimension of policy in the analysis. The extended version of this model allows the analysis of policy documents and texts, discourse preceding and/or following policies, and policy implementation. The benefit of this framework is that it enables researchers to consider the discrepancy between policies outlined in documents, and their implementation and outcome. To make the framework more useful and relevant for the purpose of this thesis, it is extended and integrated with other models mentioned above. The resultant integrated model (presented in chapter two) links the language management dimension of policy to language practices (Spolsky, 2004), and helps us recognize people's agency while taking macro pressures into account.

Policy as text, in this model, is defined as written formal policies about language use in a particular society, i.e. language laws. "Language laws and officiality" are seen as the strongest policy devices (Shohamy, 2006, pp. 59-63) because they bestow different functions, statuses, and values on languages although there is no guarantee that they achieve their desired goals, or if they are implemented at all. Policies can be viewed as interventions into language ecologies and they are considered to be "part of the ideological state apparatus" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 4).

A distinction is made between (big 'D') Discourse and (small 'd') discourse in this thesis. The Discursive function of LPP mechanisms, as I argue in chapter two, plays a significant role in the formation of particular attitudes and ideologies resulting in legitimization and normalization of policies. This thesis therefore assumes that policy exists both as (small 'd') discourse and (big 'D') Discourse. Firstly, policy exists as discourses which are defined as "instances of language in-use, being communicative acts composed of words, phrases, sentences and utterances" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 11). In Lo Bianco's terms, "statements, discussions, and public attitudes that accompany, or respond to, or precede public texts" (Lo Bianco, 2005, 2008c; 2010a, p. 49). An analysis of policy as (small 'd') discourse "represent the space for public debate and understanding, appreciation and adoption, dissemination or contest and resistance against promulgated texts of policy and the formulation of alternative courses of action" (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 49).

Secondly, policy can be also said to exist as (big 'D') Discourse. Gee (1999, 2011) defines (big 'D') Discourse as "ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and

objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity." He further argues that Discourses are always "language plus other stuff" (p. 34), and they are "embedded in a medley of social institutions, and often involve various "props" like books and magazines of various sorts, laboratories, classrooms, buildings of various sorts, various technologies" (p. 35). This means that policies implemented in institutions and domains such as the education system, media, linguistic landscape, etc enact and disseminate particular Discourses (world views) about the value and position of languages. Because these institutions and domains are often state-run or under the auspices of dominant groups, Discourses promulgated through those domains can be claimed to be political and ideological. This suggests that policy enactment and implementation of state-dominated institutions and domains enable the dominant group to plan particular Discourses. In such institutional activities of the state, language is used in an attempt to "block out alternative understandings or meanings so that the thinking process of an individual reflects what a powerful outsider desires" (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 53). Discourse planning can play a significant role in the fate of languages as it can influence people's attitudes and perceptions about languages and their speakers. Language policies, especially in these domains and institutions, can be therefore studied as "ideological construction of the world" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 12).

The policy as performance component of this model is defined as the implementation of policies. It is through the implementation of policies that particular role model behavior is realized in those domains and institutions providing linguistic and cultural models for emulation (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 49). In a sense, policy as performance is closely related to Discourse planning. That is, when policies are performed at the institutional level, particular Discourses are created and promulgated (c.f. Lo Bianco, 2005). As noted above, these Discourses are highly likely to influence people's attitudes and perception, and most-often their behavior, at the grass roots level. The interplay between the different levels of policy-making, policy implementation, and policy consuming can have useful implications for language maintenance/shift processes.

In sum, this thesis follows Fishman's (1991) argument that languages are, and should be, primarily maintained in the domain of home. Without parents' decision to pass on a language to the next generation, language maintenance or reversing language shift becomes highly unlikely. However, using the ecology of language paradigm, this study acknowledges the fact that language-related issues, language shift in this case, do not happen in a sociopolitical and historical vacuum, and therefore, takes sociopolitical and

economic context, and the role of LPP processes in shaping language ecologies into account. That is, family members' agency and choice within the family unit are influenced by the ecology surrounding home. Moreover, the research assumes a strong link between a change in ecology and language policy and planning processes. Using Shohamy's (2006) model and an extended version of Lo Bianco's framework, the role of LPP mechanisms along with their Discursive impact, such as language rules and regulations, education system, the media, and public sphere are examined here. This thesis attempts to explore how family language policies are affected by macro state policies with respect to minorities in Tabriz, Iran, addressing the primary research question of the thesis:

- **How, if at all, is Azeri being transmitted to Azeri children in Tabriz?**

In the light of arguments made above, addressing this question requires close scrutiny of the dynamics of family language policies of Azeris as well as the policies within state-run domains and institutions. Therefore, the following research questions are investigated in this research to explore how, if at all, policies in the domain of education system, linguistic landscape, and broadcasting media affect family language policies within the domain of home. The primary reason for choosing the three domains of the education system, media, and linguistic landscape was vulnerability of Azeri in these domains (see Holmes, 2013, p. 55).

- What are the language policies in the kindergartens in Tabriz?  
To what extent are they being implemented?
- What are the de facto language policies in the linguistic landscape in Tabriz?
- What is the children's behavior with respect to watching TV and listening to the radio?
  - (a) Which TV channels do they watch and for how long?
  - (b) Why do they watch certain channels?
- What are Azeri parents' attitudes towards using Azeri at home?
- What is the current language behavior of Azeri children in the home?

Examining policies in these domains in relation to the dynamics of family language policies will demonstrate to what extent, if at all, and in favor of which language the ecology inside the home is affected by the ecology outside the home. Analyses of data are



presented in four chapters. The following section provides an overview of the chapters of the thesis.

### **1.3 Overview of chapters**

This thesis is divided into four parts with each representing a different focus. Part one, including chapters two and three, situates this research in the existing literature, justifying the research questions and outlining the methodology. Part two, including chapters four, five, and six, is devoted to analyzing language policies in the state-run domains and institutions, namely, the education system, linguistic landscape, and the media, which arguably play a significant role in formation of ecology outside home. Part three, comprising chapter seven, explores family language policies in Tabriz in light of the macro policies of state. Finally, part four synthesizes the findings of the thesis and presents the conclusions drawn from this thesis.

*Chapter two* begins with reviewing the literature associated with language maintenance/shift processes. A link between language maintenance/shift processes and language policy and planning activities is established. Drawing on a number of paradigms and frameworks, chapter two situates this research in the field of LPP and highlights gaps in the existing research. The research questions of this thesis are outlined in chapter two. Finally, an integrated comprehensive model is presented.

*Chapter three* discusses the methodology used to examine language policies in four different domains. Reviewing the merits and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative approaches in research, chapter three argues for the application of mixed-methods approaches to better explore policy at different levels, i.e. macro, meso, and micro level. The rationale, data collection process, and challenges and difficulties are discussed.

*Chapter four* explores language policy in kindergartens and preschools in Tabriz using Lo Bianco's notion of policy as text, and policy as discourse. The chapter demonstrates how using Farsi in the education system has enhanced its socioeconomic value resulting in its promotion in kindergarten and authorities in Tabriz even though there is seemingly no explicit policy for kindergartens and preschools to promote Farsi. Analysing discourse produced in interviews with preschool authorities, chapter four argues that the policy implementers' attitudes and ideologies have become uncommitted and sometimes negative towards Azeri and positive and supportive towards Farsi.

*Chapter five* examines de facto language policies in the linguistic landscape, i.e. public signage, in Tabriz, linking the findings of chapter four to language use in a written

domain. The study of language use in official governmental signs illustrates inattention to and lack of support for Azeri use in public sphere. Examination of language use in bottom-up private signage also demonstrates the absence of Azeri, suggesting Azeris' low literacy as well as uncommitted if not negative attitudes towards Azeri. The stark absence of Azeri in a written domain like the linguistic landscape, both in top-down and bottom-up, suggests Azeri is not officially supported, stressing its status as an oral language.

*Chapter six* examines policies in another macro domain, namely the broadcasting media. The examination of programs aired on Sahand TV, a local Azeri channel, shows how bilingualism is encouraged for Azeris. Closer scrutiny, however, suggests the channel's role in formation of particular attitudes and ideologies about languages.

*Chapter seven* explores family language policies in relation to language policies in macro domains which shape the ecology outside home. The de facto family language policies, i.e. Azeri parents' attitudes and behavior, clearly show how their attitudes and behavior have been influenced by macro policies of state.

*Chapter eight* concludes the thesis by presenting some final reflections on the link between state policies and language maintenance/shift among minorities.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Recognizing the influential role of language policy and planning (LPP) in the fate of languages, this chapter reviews literature which explores the complex interplay between language maintenance/shift processes and language policy and planning. To examine the interaction between micro-level beliefs, attitudes and actual behavior of people, and macro level policy-making and meso-level policy implementation, a number of theoretical frameworks are critically reviewed. The ecology of language paradigm is used as an overarching framework where linguistic phenomena, e.g. language maintenance/shift, take place. An examination of the ecology of language paradigm presented in the chapter provides support for a broader ecological approach to LPP, as well as considering LPP "a kind of social practice, specifically, a practice of power" (Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009, p. 767). Taking an interdisciplinary approach, a number of theoretical frameworks from discourse analysis and critical social studies are integrated to illuminate the complexity of language maintenance/shift processes in multilingual nation-states. The discussion of those frameworks provides a basis for identifying different dimensions of language policy as well as the mechanisms through which the policies may be translated into beliefs, attitudes or actual behavior, which in turn may have an impact on vitality of languages in language-contact situations. An integrated model is finally presented.

### **2.1 Linguistic diversity and language shift**

The decline of linguistic and cultural diversity is a widespread and unsettling phenomenon around the globe. Of an estimated number of 6000-7000 languages of the world, it is argued that 3000 can be classified as threatened (Wurm, 2001). Concern about the loss of diversity and vitality of the world's languages has been earnestly building for over two decades since Krauss (1992) predicted the loss or endangerment of the majority of the world's languages in the long run. Although Krauss' (1992) estimation that only ten percent of languages are safe has been critiqued as too pessimistic (Simons & Lewis, 2011), empirical studies now show that linguistic and cultural diversity has globally declined twenty percent in just thirty five years, between 1970 and 2005 (Harmon & Loh, 2010). Nettle and Romaine (2000), for example, report that of an estimated 300 languages spoken in the United States of America when Columbus arrived in 1492, nearly half of the languages are extinct today. Australia also loses one or two of its Aboriginal languages per

year. Although more than 250 languages may have existed in Australia before European contact, it is predicted that all the Aboriginal languages will die if nothing is done to protect them (McKay, 2007). A brief look at other parts of the world confirms the same dismal picture. In China, a process of intergenerational language shift toward Mandarin (Chinese) is firmly underway in many regions. Minority nationalities consequently lack confidence in their own mother tongues, believing that mastery of Chinese will help them secure more opportunities (Bradley, 2005). In Pakistan, Rahman (2003) notes that there are six major languages and over fifty nine minor languages. Since the policy of the state favors two languages, Urdu and English, languages like Aer (200 speakers reported in 1998), Gowro (200 speakers reported in 1990), Kundal Shahi (500 speakers reported in 2003), and others appear to be on the verge of extinction. In Africa where approximately 2000 languages (nearly one third of the world's languages) are spoken, a ten percent loss of linguistic diversity is considered likely by the end of this century (Batibo, 2005).

As a part of a more general pattern of declining linguistic diversity around the globe, language loss in Iran has been also reported. "Older stages of Iranian languages, such as Avestan, Old and Middle Persian, Pehlevi, Parthian, Sogdian, Chorasmian, Bactrian, Sarmatian and Khotanese, have gone extinct or have effectively been superseded by later stages of Iranian" (Moseley, 2007, p. 315). Research findings about the current linguistic situation in Iran suggest that Iran's minority languages such as Azeri, Kurdish, and other smaller languages are overwhelmed by Farsi, the official language of the country, in different domains and institutions (e.g. Hassanpour, et al., 2012; Hawes & Mirvahedi, 2013; Holmes, 2013; Mirvahedi, 2012).

Of all the many different reasons cited for language loss, such as natural catastrophes, famine, disease, war and genocide, a high emigration rate, a high immigration rate, and/or a differential birth or death resulting in a statistically marked change in the ratio of speakers for two languages in a community, today language shift is regarded as the most prevalent reason (Dorian, 1980; Grenoble, 2011; Sallabank, 2012). That is, a process whereby a community begins to gradually add a language to its linguistic repertoire over generations at the cost of its ethnic heritage language, resulting in "a reduction in the number of speakers of a language, a decreasing saturation of language speakers in the population, a loss in language proficiency, or a decreasing use of that language in different domains." It is consequently considered a "downward language movement" and a "negative language development" which can lead to language endangerment and finally language death (Baker, 2001, p. 59). By contrast, the opposite

process, i.e. language maintenance, can be said to be an additive and/or positive language development which leads to "relative language stability in number and distribution of its speakers, its proficient usage by children and adults, and its retention in specific domains (e.g. home, school, religion)" (Baker, 2001, p. 59). The processes are seen as "two sides of the same coin," and thus, a good understanding of language shift process can contribute to language maintenance endeavors, illuminating how linguistic diversity can be maintained, and how language shift may possibly be reversed (Gafaranga, 2010).

Family members, i.e. parents and children (and grandparents in extended families) within the domain of home are recognized as playing a key role in language maintenance/shift processes (Fishman, 1991; 2001; Pfaff, 1990; Queen, 2003; Spolsky, 2011). Exploring language ideologies, attitudes, and practices of family members in the home, i.e. family language policy, can arguably provide not only the earliest evidence for the path of contact-induced language change, but it can also shed light on the nature of such changes (Letsholo, 2009; Pfaff, 1990; Spolsky, 2011). The current state of the language can thus be inferred by referring to the age of youngest speaker, and the absence of children speaking the language. Evidence that intergenerational transmission of the language has ceased predicts that a variety may soon disappear (Spolsky, 2011). It is, therefore, maintained that favorable family language policy towards language(s) can determine, and potentially guarantee, their vitality within a community to a great extent. Positive attitudes towards a language can serve as a contributing factor in the vitality of a language. By contrast, negative attitudes may be a prime cause of intergenerational discontinuity of a language (Baker, 2006). Family language policy towards languages is considered so important that some believe that "all meaningful language policy is ultimately played out in the home," and policies can be said to have succeeded if favorable attitudes and perceptions about the use of the dominant language in the home are formed (Caldas, 2012, p. 351). Intergenerational transmission of a language is, therefore, viewed as the "gold standard of language vitality" (Sallabank, 2012, p. 106), and the main factor in language survival (Fishman, 1991, 2001). Against this background, this thesis addresses the following question as its principal and overarching question in an under-researched language-contact setting, i.e. Tabriz, Iran:

Primary research question:

- How, if at all, is Azeri being transmitted to Azeri children in Tabriz?

Although intergenerational transmission and parents and children's role and decisions in this process are regarded as the most important factor in language maintenance/shift, family members' choices and decisions are constrained by factors beyond the family's control (Caldas, 2012; Lane, 2010; Sicoli, 2011; Spolsky, 2009; Tollefson, 1991). Lane, for example, argues that despite the fact that the loss of intergenerational language transmission can be seen, in part, as a choice parents make, in reality "they do not always have a choice" (Lane, 2010, p. 63). Their actions are influenced by large-scale social factors such as language policies and attitudes toward minority languages. This reinforces an argument by Spolsky (2009) that each domain has its own policy which is influenced both internally and externally. Similarly, Sicoli (2011) writes that it is commonly held that language shift takes place because speakers "choose" to do so, achieving some gain (such as socioeconomic mobility). However, "agency, rather than the free will of an individual acting from a rational position, is emergent in social practice." Actions are "socioculturally constrained both in the possibility of their deployments and in their effects." Sicoli further argues that because acts changing and/or sustaining a society are situated in sociocultural matrices, it is problematic to assume that agency only lies in individual action (Sicoli, 2011, p. 162). This, as Blommaert (2005) argues, does not mean eliminating creativity, choice, or freedom from our analysis. Rather, situating individual agency within a wider frame of constraints brings the issue of agency, creativity and choice analytically into sharper focus.

This argument suggests two main points about language maintenance/shift processes. Firstly, it seems safe to say that it is not only parents and/or children who influence the choice of language(s) of the home. In other words, language maintenance/shift processes are situated in an ecology of language where the home is one of the key domains, and not the only key domain. Secondly, intergenerational discontinuity of language, often leading to language shift on a community scale, can be taken as a sign of sociopolitical, economic, and cultural subordination on a larger scale. As Sallabank (2012) argues, of all the reasons cited for language loss, it is sociocultural, economic and political dominance of some groups over others that brings about motivations among dominated and marginalized groups to shift to dominant languages. As a result of this process, minority languages come to be stigmatized, leading to negative attitudes and ideologies towards such languages (c.f. Dye & Dye, 2012). In other words, language shift and language attrition, are the primary causes for language loss, and it happens, often through transitional bilingualism, when speakers of a language decide to stop speaking

their own tongue in favor of a politically and/or economically dominant neighboring language (Grenoble, 2011; Wang & Chong, 2011).

It is, thus, simplistic to hold only family and family language policy responsible for language maintenance/shift phenomena and ignore the influencing pressures surrounding home. This perspective opens possibilities of investigating why such phenomena take place in a society as it allows the examination of the ecology of language and factors influencing such ecologies.

## **2.2 Ecology of language**

"Ecology of language," or ecolinguistics (cf. Fill, 1997), can be used as a comprehensive explanatory model to study language-related issues (Calvet, 2006). Taken originally from research in the natural sciences to protect endangered species and preserve diversity, the ecology of language paradigm was first introduced into linguistic studies to examine the interaction of a language with its environment, defined as the interaction of a language with "other languages in the minds of bi- and multilingual speakers . . ." as well as "with the society in which it functions as a medium of communication" (Haugen, 1972, p. 325). The key concept behind the term "ecology of language," as Creese and Martin (2003) argue, is that language is not viewed as a separate entity from a society which uses it (c.f. Steffensen & Nash, 2007). An ecological approach to linguistic phenomena, consequently, involves an exploration of "the relationship of languages to each other and to the society in which these languages exist" which includes "the geographical, socio-economic and cultural conditions in which the speakers of a given language exist, as well as the wider linguistic environment" (Creese & Martin, 2003, p. 1). In other words, the ecology of language paradigm investigates the interrelations between linguistic ecologies and social, historical, sociolinguistic, and political forces at different levels of individual, community, and society (Mühlhäusler, 1996). Within this perspective, language is thus seen as part of "larger meaning-making resources," including "all the affordances that the physical, social, and symbolic worlds have to offer" (van Lier, 2008, p. 599), enabling the researcher to "map all aspects of the language environment, from the sociological to the psychological" (Hornberger & Hult, 2008, p. 281; Kramsch & Vork Steffensen, 2008).

Because language is not separated from social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic factors, but rather, seen to be in constant interaction with those ecological factors (Adamou, 2010; Grenoble, 2011), the ecology of language paradigm allows the examination of a wide range of relevant possible explanations for linguistic phenomena in

a given area. "Interrelated sequences of causes and effects" are examined to explain "changes in the traditional language behavior of one group under the influence of another" which might result in a switch in the language of one of the groups (Mackey, 2001, p. 68). Within this paradigm, language loss is thus seen as a result of a language losing its *oikos*, the Greek root meaning "home." An *oikos*, defined as "a complex ecological support system," is considered vital for languages' sustained well-being, and loss of such a supportive system rather than speakers and planners' intentions is regarded as the major reason for language loss (Mühlhäusler, 1992, 1996). In this view, "human communities need to be sustainable in order to maintain their languages, and in order to support a language it is necessary to support the group that speaks it" (Sallabank, 2012, p. 122). Language shift becomes likely when one or some of the ecological factors, such as, "the number of speakers, relationship with other languages, patterns of transmission, speakers' attitudes, domains of use, institutional support" (Mühlhäusler, 1992, pp. 173-177), undermine a language in its ecology. As a consequence, the language loses its "ecological niche" assigned in a linguistic ecosystem which is defined on the basis of its relation with other languages and with its milieu, the place it occupies in the ecosystem, and its functions (Calvet, 2006, p. 24). Clearly, language loss or death becomes imminent when a language loses its functions and place in a language-contact context. The traditional language maintenance and preservation measures which were concerned with preserving the structure of languages by providing dictionaries, grammar, and "high literature," are, therefore, considered unlikely to succeed unless the "question of language ecology" is asked (Mühlhäusler, 1992, p. 164).

Although the ecology of language paradigm has opened a window into a more contextualized examination of linguistic issues, and it promotes diversity, and multilingualism, offering the possibility of discussion and inclusion of linguistic rights of speakers of all languages in research (May, 2003; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 2008), the paradigm has not been without its critiques and criticisms. The main criticism leveled against the paradigm is a terminological one with important political implications. It is argued that "biologisation of languages" (Pennycook, 2004) and associating biodiversity with linguistic diversity can be misleading, leading us into the fallacy of dealing with languages as an organism (Edwards, 2009; Mackey, 2001). The wholesale adoption of ecological and biomorphic metaphors such as ecology, survival, death, and adaptation to the environment implies the view that "language loss is an inevitable part of the cycle of social and linguistic evolution." One thus can view language



loss as "simply a failure on its part, or its speakers, to compete adequately in the modern world, where of course, only the fittest languages can (and should) survive" (May, 2008a, p. 3). It is believed that the reinforcement of such social Darwinism leads to "depoliticization of language diversity" neglecting and obscuring the wider historical, social and political factors at work in language loss (May, 2008a, p. 3; Pennycook, 2004, p. 216). Accordingly, Pennycook (2004, p. 223) argues that "language ecology downplays human agency and linguistic creativity; and by locating a notion of diversity only in the enumeration of languages, it draws attention away from other forms of linguistic diversity and political action" (see also May, 2005, 2012a).

Liddicoat (2013) argues that language ecologies incorporating speech communities are subject to "hierarchies of prestige." These hierarchical differences are inseparably connected with "ideological and cultural constructions." Greater value is thus attributed to large dominant languages whereas lesser value is given to smaller, minority languages. These differences of value ultimately influence "what gets planned in the language ecology, what needs to be planned, and reactions accorded to particular interventions in language" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 5). This necessitates that ecology of language be viewed as ideologically and discursively constructed, rather than a peaceful, kind and gentle environment/space for and among languages and their speakers. Commenting on Mühlhäusler's (2000, p. 308) wishful and utopian thinking that "metaphors of 'struggle of life and survival' taken from the first Darwinian insights entailing 'adaptations of all kinds with the web of life,' should be replaced by the 'appreciation of all kinds and their abilities to cooperate and co-exist, rather than kill, exploit and suppress,'" Edwards (2004, 2010), for instance, brings the issue of ideology to the fore. He writes that the key word here is "should," and the key question is whether there is a real desire to achieve that goal (Edwards, 2004, 2008, 2010), indicating the political nature of language ecologies. It is thus argued that language ecologies can be better investigated if complemented with examination of ideologies of language (Blackledge, 2008).

In sum, languages need a complex social, cultural, economical, and political support system to survive and thrive. Because the continuity of languages is bound up with the life of its users, language decline and death may indicate changes in the circumstances of their speakers (Edwards, 2010, p. 38). This truth should not, however, ignore the fact that the life of some can be altered by others. In fact, "languages become minorized because speaker communities are marginalized" (Sallabank, 2012, p. 122), and that is because planning in human ecologies is "ultimately contingent upon the ideological

positions of those in power" (Edwards, 2009, p. 227). As noted above, the ecology of language paradigm has not paid adequate attention to the most common cause of language endangerment, i.e. sociocultural, economic and political dominance of some over others. Neglecting the role of human agency in language maintenance/shift processes hinders investigations of why language shift takes place on the one hand, and effective policies to reverse language shift processes, on the other.

Ricento (2000) points out that we need a conceptual framework to bridge the gap between micro-sociolinguistics work on language choice, dealing with language behavior, identity and agency, and macro-sociolinguistic work on language policy. As a result, as Ricento (2000) argues, LPP should be responsive to, and potentially apply, developments in other fields such as discourse analysis, ethnography and critical social theory. An interdisciplinary approach to LPP studies and the integration of micro-level research (the sociolinguistics of language) and macro-level investigations (the sociolinguistics of society) can provide an answer to this important, yet unanswered, question, "why do individuals opt to use (or cease to use) particular languages and varieties for specified functions in different domains, and how do these choices influence - and how are they influenced by - institutional language policy decision-making (local, national or supranational)?" (Ricento, 2000, p. 208). The development of a conceptual framework (ecology of language or perhaps some other) will lead us to "the next - as yet unnamed - phase of language policy and planning research and scholarship" (Ricento, 2000, p. 209). Proposing the title "integrationist" for the new unnamed era of LPP, Pennycook (2004) argues that integrationist research could maintain elements of the language ecology paradigm, mainly the embedded and complex relationship between languages and their environments, while not reducing languages to biological entities, insisting on the importance of seeing language as a "cultural artefact and part of human endeavours to create new worlds" (Pennycook, 2004, p. 213).

In response to criticisms and suggestions reviewed above, the following sections explore a number of theoretical frameworks within the field of language policy to integrate the ecology of language paradigm with language policy and planning activities.

### **2.3 Ecology of language and LPP**

Language policy and planning, initially described as 'language engineering' (see Cooper, 1989; Karam, 1974) was traditionally proposed as a rational solution to linguistic problems at nation-state level, generally known as "treatment of language problems"

(Neustupný, 1974). Early language policy and planning approaches tended to avoid the larger social, economic, and political setting where language change, use, and development took place (Cooper, 1989; Tollefson, 2008). Defined as "the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community" (Haugen, 1959, p. 8), LPP, in a period labeled as "decolonization, structuralism, and pragmatism" (Ricento, 2000), was primarily associated with seemingly ideologically-neutral activities (Luke, Mchoul, & Mey, 1990, p. 26). During this stage, LPP was regarded solely as a non-political, non-ideological, nation-unifying and pragmatic paradigm which focused on establishing a stable diglossic society where majority languages were promoted as public languages of wider communication (cf. Tauli, 1974, p. 64). Influenced by the positivist views prevailing in social sciences and linguistics, LPP theories and models of the time promulgated the naive belief that major problems of societies could be solved through scientific methods and planning (Baldauf, 2004; Luke, et al., 1990). As a result of such beliefs, a series of technical distinctions, such as "selection, codification, elaboration, and implementation" (Haugen, 1959), and "status planning" and "corpus planning" (Kloss, 1969), were developed aiming "to provide linguists with the theoretical vocabulary to systematically approach and diagnose LPP-related issues" (Wee, 2011, p. 12). As a consequence, little attention was given to questions of how LPP processes might help "sustain dominance and dependency relations between groups" (Wee, 2011, p. 13). In those early approaches to LPP, labeled by Mühlhäusler as "non-ecological approaches to LPP," the aim was to achieve the dominance of a (national) language over other languages through "reserving a number of important public domains for a single language (e.g. law, army, broadcasting), compulsory education in a national language, making other languages invisible by not naming, renaming, banning publications and similar methods, and by resettlement of minorities or redrawing of administrative boundaries" (Mühlhäusler, 2000, p. 329). Such LPP approaches did not take into account the effects of those LPP decisions and processes leading to the destruction of language ecologies resulting in language loss, reducing linguistic diversity all over the world (e.g. Nettle & Romaine, 2000; Crystal, 2000; Dixon, 1980; Rahman, 2003).

Language policy and planning in the modern era has been noted for its impact on the ecology of languages (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2008). In fact, language policy and planning can be defined as a process that involves "intervening in the linguistic ecologies of a society with the aim of influencing its future linguistic practices" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 2).

In the same vein, Calvet (2006, p. 46) argues that an ecolinguistic situation can be modified mainly by two factors, namely "the habits of the speakers" such as immigration, and disruption in transmission of the dominated languages from one generation to another, and "the actions of the state power such as the choice of linguistic policies, schooling, literacy, the media, etc.," indicating human agency in shaping and manipulation of language ecologies. These domains and institutions, such as the education system, media, language regulations, linguistic landscape, etc., become a tool to bring about changes, for good or ill, in language ecologies.

The domains and institutions whose functions can be governed by states, or dominant groups were first recognized and labeled as institutional support in Giles and his colleagues' model, "ethnolinguistic vitality model" (Giles, et al., 1977). They proposed that three main factors, i.e. the number of speakers, status, and the institutional support a group receives, were most likely to influence the linguistic vitality of groups. These factors were considered particularly significant to minority groups. According to this model, the more status a linguistic group has and the more speakers use the language, the more linguistic vitality the group can be said to possess. Moreover, because the vitality of language is related to its use in various institutions and domains, the institutional support a linguistic group receives may influence the vitality of language to a great extent (Giles, et al., 1977, p. 309). They argue that a group's language is vital to the extent that its language is well represented in domains and institutions such as mass media, education system, parliament, work, etc. (Giles, et al., 1977, pp. 315-316). Providing a group with more institutional support which makes its language use possible in different domains and institutions may raise its status both in the eyes of the minority and majority group members. These factors are highly likely to go hand in hand and work as contributing factors for maintaining languages.

What was not explicitly taken into account in Giles and his colleagues' predominantly descriptive model was the point that those critical domains and institutions are controlled and thus can be manipulated by dominant groups in a given context leading to language shift or loss. The framework did not address how institutional supports can act as mechanisms to control and manipulate groups. Including a strong link between LPP decisions and presence (or lack thereof) of institutional support for a group in analyses enables researchers to connect language policy and planning processes with their outcome and impact on groups and their languages.

Shohamy (2006), for example, argues that the provision or lack of such institutional support for groups is ideological: language policy and planning operate through mechanisms, including rules and regulations, language education, language tests, language in public space, ideology-myth-propaganda-coercion, and so on, which are usually opaque to the public. As she argues, it is these overt and/or covert mechanisms that create the "real policies" (Shohamy, 2006). Capable of manipulating state ideologies, these mechanisms are said to be covertly and implicitly perpetuating language practices. Rules and regulations, for example, are used by states along with other "symbolic markers" to "determine who is 'in' and who is 'out'" (Shohamy, 2006, p. 26). National languages are usually assigned certain prestigious functions through rules and regulations which are used as "devices of power and control," and they are regarded as "symbols of inclusion and exclusion." People who know those languages are thus associated with prestige and power, and those who can/do not are seen as having low class and prestige (Shohamy, 2006, p. 29). Acknowledging the role of states in accelerating language shift processes, Spolsky (2011) similarly argues that educational systems and other forms of management, e.g. language laws, the media, etc., are used by governments to encourage people to switch from vernaculars to official standard languages. Because policies behind language management are not necessarily written, Spolsky's (2004) suggests that policy may be implicit, or the explicit one may not be implemented. Accordingly, "there is no obvious answer to the question of what the language policy of a nation is" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 39). The answer to the "real policy" question lies in the language practices, and language beliefs and ideologies of a community. Within this school of thought, "language policy falls in the midst of these manipulations and battles, between language ideology and practice" (Shohamy, 2006, p. xv).

Both Spolsky's (2004) and Shohamy's (2006) frameworks address criticisms of early LPP work. These frameworks extend language policy research to include not just explicit aspects of language policy (language policy statements), but also implicit aspects of language policy (the practices and beliefs of a community, or the de facto policy). Shohamy extends Spolsky's framework to investigate the complex relationship between language management, practices and beliefs/ideology through the means of mechanisms. This expanded view of language policy has been developed specifically because of the discrepancy between declared policies and de facto policies (Shohamy 2006: 52–53). Nonetheless, despite understandings Shohamy's (2006) model offers, it has been critiqued for its major weakness, i.e. assuming "much more focused and successful effort on the part

of bureaucrats and politicians than the evidence warrants" (Spolsky, 2008a, p. 141). Because "language planning does not solely depend upon the imprimatur of the powerful; it also requires acceptance from those whose linguistic habits are to be affected" (Edwards, 2009, p. 228; Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008), an integrationist approach, as noted above, should also account for not only written policies and the mechanisms through which they are implemented but also policy implementers' and policy consumers' attitudes and perceptions at different level of analysis, i.e. the macro, meso and micro levels. Therefore, in order to examine the main research question of this thesis regarding the intergenerational transmission of Azeri in Tabriz, more specific research questions of this thesis are outlined below. These questions concern four domains, home, the education system, linguistic landscapes, and media.

- What are Azeri parents' attitudes towards using Azeri at home?
- What is the current language behavior of Azeri children in the home?

As argued above, family language policy, including parents and children's attitudes and behavior towards languages, does not happen in a vacuum. Rather, family language policy is constantly influenced by the ecology surrounding the home. Reviewing the critiques and criticisms of the ecology of language paradigm, I contended that language ecologies are ideological constructs, and thus, the role of language policy and planning and LPP mechanisms (Shohamy, 2006) needs to be considered. Consequently, three domains and institutions most relevant to the case of Azeri in Tabriz are chosen for investigating the role of LPP in shaping the ecology within which Azeri exists.

Kindergartens within the education system, as the first domain where children encounter "social policy of the broadest kind (cultural pluralism or assimilation for example)" (Edwards & Giles, 1984, p. 120), are selected as the first site to investigate the role of LPP in the Azeri language ecology (see chapter four), addressing the following question:

- What are the language policies in the kindergartens in Tabriz?  
And to what extent are they being implemented?

Linguistic landscape (public signage) research is a recent development within the field of LPP and a domain which can illuminate the dominant and marginalized discourses on language (Puzey, 2012; Reershemius, 2011). The linguistic landscape in Tabriz is investigated here to shed light on "how authorities wish to portray a local linguistic

situation," and whether, if at all, that particular portrayal is accepted by the general population (Puzey, 2012, p. 141). The following research question is consequently examined in chapter five:

- What are the (de facto) language policies in the linguistic landscape in Tabriz?

The last domain investigated as a mechanism of LPP is the broadcast media. Addressing the following question, chapter six investigates Azeri parents and children's attitudes and behavior (in other words, family language policy) towards broadcast media available to them, including Sahand TV, a local channel for Azeris.

- What are the parents and children's attitudes and behavior with respect to watching TV?
  - (a) Which TV channels do they watch and for how long?
  - (c) Why do they watch certain channels?

To be able to investigate these questions comprehensively, another model is explored here. What follows is the development of Lo Bianco's (2005, 2008c) model. The expansion and integration of this model with the models presented above provides us with a zoom lens. At its widest angle, macro sociopolitical and economic structures can be analyzed. It also enables us to examine policies at meso and institutional level. Focusing on the micro level, the model allows us to explore grass roots attitudes and behavior as well.

## **2.4 Policy as text, discourse, and performance**

To better understand the interplay between macro policies, the institutions through which policies are enacted, and the people's attitudes and behavior with respect to those policies, this thesis uses Lo Bianco's (2005, 2008c) "policy as text, discourse, and performance" model, or what he recently labeled as "intention, interpretation, and implementation" model (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013). By examining policy at three levels (namely macro, meso, and micro levels), the analyses help us investigate the complex relation between formal written policies at the macro level, how those policies are actually interpreted and implemented by policy implementers at the meso level, and how such implementations of policies are received by policy consumers at the micro level.

Policy as text, in this model, is defined as written formal policies about "intended language futures" (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013, p. 3) in a particular society, i.e. language laws, or in Spolsky's words, "the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan about

language use" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 11). "Language laws and officiality" are seen as the strongest of policy devices (Shohamy, 2006, pp. 59-63) because they bestow different functions, statuses, and values on different languages (although there is no guarantee that they are implemented the way they are stated, if they are at all implemented, i.e. the relation between policy and practice is complex and a cause-and-effect relation cannot be assumed (e.g. see Cincotta-Segi, 2011)). Yet, language policy documents are seen as "interventions into the language ecology that seek to shape that ecology to particular ends by mobilizing the resources of the state for language objectives." As such, they are considered to be "part of the ideological state apparatus" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 4). Formal policies consequently define a set of possibilities for languages and their speakers which play a significant part in empowering certain groups and disempowering others. However, given that there is no direct cause-and-effect relation between policy and practice and the relation between the two is complex, the examination of "intermediate organizational entities" (Fairclough, 2011, p. 120) such as education systems, media, etc. becomes very important. The investigation of practices of such institutions can shed light on the relation between social structures (such as political, economic, structure, etc) which define a set of possibilities and what actually happens (Fairclough, 2011; van Dijk, 2008). It is through such intermediary practices that certain structural possibilities in particular areas of life are selected and retained while others are excluded (Fairclough, 2011, p. 120). This model can advance our understanding of how written formal policies which define a set of possibilities are mediated and finally performed by policy implementers, and how such implementations are consumed, contested or endorsed, by policy consumers at the grass roots level.

To include the role of the intermediate organizational entities in policy analyses, the discursive nature of such institutions should be considered in the study. It is argued that the political nature of policies may be obscured if policies are analyzed only as text, but not discourse (Ball, 1993; Lo Bianco, 2005). The definition of discourse in this model is extended here to refer to two types of discourses. Firstly, policy exists as discourses which are defined as "instances of language in-use, being communicative acts composed of words, phrases, sentences and utterances" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 11), what Gee (1999, 2011) terms (little 'd') discourse. In language policy research, this is what Lo Bianco defines as "statements, discussions, and public attitudes that accompany, or respond to, or precede public texts" (Lo Bianco, 2005, 2008c; 2010a, p. 49). An analysis of policy as (small 'd') discourse "represent the space for public debate and understanding, appreciation and



adoption, dissemination or contest and resistance against promulgated texts of policy and the formulation of alternative courses of action" (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 49). In other words, this type of discourse arises because "official texts require legitimacy and confirmation to succeed" (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013, p. 3).

Secondly, policy can be also said to exist as (big 'D') Discourse. Gee (2011) defines (big 'D') Discourse as "ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity" (29). He further argues that Discourses are always "language plus other stuff" (p. 34), and they are "embedded in a medley of social institutions, and often involve various "props" like books and magazines of various sorts, laboratories, classrooms, buildings of various sorts, various technologies" (p. 35). In a sense, it can be arguably said that Discourses are enacted and disseminated through, by, and in the macro domains and institutions such as the education system, media, linguistic landscape, etc. (e.g. Mumby & Mease, 2011; van Dijk, 2008). These domains construct and project implicit, often-ideological, messages, and images onto their audience. These Discursively constructed messages and images are often about the value and position of different languages and their speakers (Blackledge, 2008). This is closely related to Lo Bianco's policy as performance. He defines performance as the role-model as well as subversive, transgressive and undermining behavior that powerful and significant institutions and individuals perform to provide linguistic and cultural models for emulation (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 49). Because such domains and institutions, or LPP mechanisms, are usually state-run or work under the auspices of dominant groups, Discourses promulgated through those domains can be claimed to be political and ideological. I consequently suggest that this type of (big 'D') Discourse can be accordingly planned by dominant groups to construct and impose a particular way of seeing the world (c.f. Gee, 2011). Policies, especially in these domains and institutions, can be therefore studied as "ideological construction of the world" (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 12). In such ideological constructions, language is used in an attempt to "block out alternative understandings or meanings so that the thinking process of an individual reflects what a powerful outsider desires" (Lo Bianco, 2010a, p. 53). Discourse planning can play a significant role in the fate of languages as it can influence people's attitudes and perceptions about languages and their speakers.

Exploring discourse in policy analyses and the distinction between policy as (small 'd') discourse and (big 'D') Discourse has two major implications for language policy

research. Firstly, viewing functions of macro domains and institutions as essentially Discursive can be a response to criticisms of Shohmay's (2006) model. Rather than assuming a cause and effect relation between LPP mechanisms and behavior at grass roots level, examining them as Discourse planning devices leaves space for grass roots agency and activism. Within this framework, although certain types of Discourses are constructed and promulgated through those domains, people have a choice to either endorse or contest such Discourses. This is not, however, to suggest that those domains and institutions function only Discursively and do not provide any tangible benefits, e.g. literacy in a language. In fact, when those Discourses and socioeconomic gain work in tandem within a domain, they make the strongest Discourse planning device, e.g. in education systems (see chapter four).

Secondly, Lo Bianco (2005) often uses policy as discourse and discourse planning interchangeably and without distinguishing between discourse and Discourse, implying that discourse, i.e. interactions in their social context, can be planned through policy processes. The distinction made above helps understand the two concepts as two distinct concepts at two different levels, discourse at the micro and meso level, and Discourse at the macro level. (Small 'd') discourse, i.e. instances of interaction, can be examined at the meso level (those who are involved in policy implementations), as well as the micro level (the policy consumers), which can be distinguished from the (big 'D') Discourse. Moreover, in contrast to Lo Bianco (2005, p. 262) who asserts that "discourse planning is rarely conscious," defining Discourse planning as above makes it clear that Discourse planning like other types of planning is a political, ideological, and conscious process to bring about a desired effect. As I argue throughout this thesis, it is through Discourse planning processes that social structures are (re)produced (see also van Dijk, 2008, p. 23). Accepting the dominant Discourse(s) in favor of the dominant language(s) is likely to result in negative attitudes and perceptions about the minority and regional languages, which in turn may lead to language shift.

The inclusion of micro and meso level discourse, and macro level Discourse in policy analysis can provide useful information. The examination of policy implementers and policy consumers' discourse can demonstrate how policies are interpreted and enacted at the micro and meso level, and to what extent, if at all, those discourses derive their meaning from macro level Discourses (Liddicoat, 2013, p. 11). It is through the examination of both types of discourses and Discourses, rather than only discourses as Lo Bianco's work suggests, that "the precise interpretation of the intended language policy, its

level of seriousness or otherwise, covert messages it carries or conceals" can be revealed (Lo Bianco, 2008c, p. 168). Consequently, investigations of this type may serve researchers to shed light on latent attitudes of policy implementers as well as policy consumers. The issue of attitudes are indeed regarded very important in LPP studies and some have argued that the success/failure of LPP decisions depend on the extent to which they have been successful to change attitudes (Baker, 1992, 2006).

The success of policies, whatever their goals might be, through intermediary practices of major state-run domains depend on Discourse practices which may take different forms in different contexts. Discourse practices as a "political practice" are defined as those (Discursive) practices which aim to naturalize particular power relations and ideologies and eliminate as much resistance as possible (Lo Bianco, 2012b, p. 225; Woodside-Jiron, 2011, pp. 167, 169). In van Dijk's (2008) words, the crucial factor A to exert mental control over B is that B must know about "A's wishes, wants, preferences, or intentions." Apart from direct communication, such messages are delivered through (public) Discourse which is often advertised in domains such as mass media, education systems, etc. In other words, the practices of politics as a social domain are "virtually exclusively discursive" which brings about the reproduction of political ideologies through Discourse. It is through (public) Discourse that public's minds, i.e. their knowledge, opinions, attitudes and ideologies, and consequently the behavior and actions are influenced (and often controlled). In such a scenario, van Dijk (2008, p. 15) argues that since people are "persuaded, seduced, indoctrinated, or manipulated," there is no need for coercion (see also Lo Bianco, 2008a; Nye, 2004).

The view of policy as Discourse dictated by a powerful authority through state-run institutions as an attempt to influence another group's attitudes, perceptions, and thoughts is of great relevance and significance to the language contact situations where a dominated minority group is under pressure by a dominant group, as is the case for Azeri in Tabriz. As Ball (1993, p. 15) notes, discourse constructs and allows certain power relations, "redistributing voice," so that "it does not matter what some people say or think, only certain voices can be heard as meaningful or authoritative" (see also Heller, 2008). Referring to the discursive effect of policies, Ball (1993, p.12) further argues that policies may not directly tell someone what to do, but they "create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed." As I argue in this thesis, particular language ecologies are often Discursively created by/through state-run domains and institutions.

The policy as performance component of my adapted version of Lo Bianco's model is defined in this thesis as the implementation of policies within macro domains and institutions. It is through the implementation of policies that particular role model behavior is realized in those domains and institutions. Unlike Lo Bianco who does not explicitly refer to the outcome of the performance of policies, I argue that when policies are performed, in other words implemented, at the institutional level, particular Discourses are created and promulgated. In a sense, policy as performance can be said to be closely related to Discourse planning. As noted above, these Discourses are highly likely to influence people's attitudes and perception, and most-often their behavior, at the grass roots level. The interplay between the different levels of policy-making, policy implementation, and policy consuming has useful implications for language maintenance/shift processes.

Drawing on Ball's (1993, p. 10) definition of policy as "text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended," Lo Bianco argues that policy is "an ensemble of activities, some of which are textual (laws, reports, authorisations), others of which are discursive (speeches, radio debates), while still others involve the public performance of behaviors that powerful individuals or institutions hold up as models to be followed" (Lo Bianco, 2008c, p. 157). Although this definition of policy is useful, I suggest here that the distinction between (big 'D') Discourse and (small 'd') discourse and including the notion of Discourse planning as defined above could provide a more comprehensive definition, enabling us to explore policy simultaneously at macro, meso, and micro levels. Supplementing the analysis of formal textual announcements of policy with additional analyses of discourses around them as well as investigating the functions of macro domains and institutions provides access to discursive aspects of language planning. Within this framework, these domains and institutions can function as vehicles for Discourse planning, such as when particular programs are broadcast in certain language(s) on a TV channel, or when a particular language dominates schools and the linguistic landscapes of a bi/multilingual region. The Discourses generated through these mechanisms becomes a model for the target audience to follow. Discourse planning should not, however, be viewed as a sinister act in nature. Rather, we should investigate 'what type of discourse' is produced 'by whom,' 'for what purposes,' 'through what mechanisms,' and 'with what effects' (c.f. Cooper, 1989). It is contended that the discursive context indicates how policy as text is to be "interpreted, evaluated and enacted" (Lo Bianco, 2008c, p. 168).

Ball (1993) argues that in the analysis of complex social issues such as policy and language maintenance/shift, we need a "a toolbox of diverse concepts and theories" (p. 10). The following section presents a comprehensive model as an integrationist approach to exploring the interplay between language policy and planning and language maintenance/shift processes, particularly in the domain of home. The model proposes a way in understanding how policies work in favor of particular language(s), disempowering other language(s) and group(s), especially within multilingual nation-states.

## 2.5 A proposed model of the interplay between language policy and language maintenance/shift

Language maintenance/shift is a complex issue because it involves human agency on the one hand, and macro sociopolitical, historical, cultural, and economic structures, on the other. The issue becomes even more complicated when the interplay between human agency and macro structures are considered, realizing that human agency, freedom, and choice is constrained by "normatives, determined by the general patterns of inequality" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 99). An investigation of the connection between agency and structure in relation to language maintenance/shift processes can shed light on questions like "why do individuals opt to use (or cease to use) particular languages and varieties for specified functions in different domains, and how do these choices influence - and how are they influenced by - institutional language policy decision-making (local, national or supranational)?" (Ricento, 2000, p. 208).

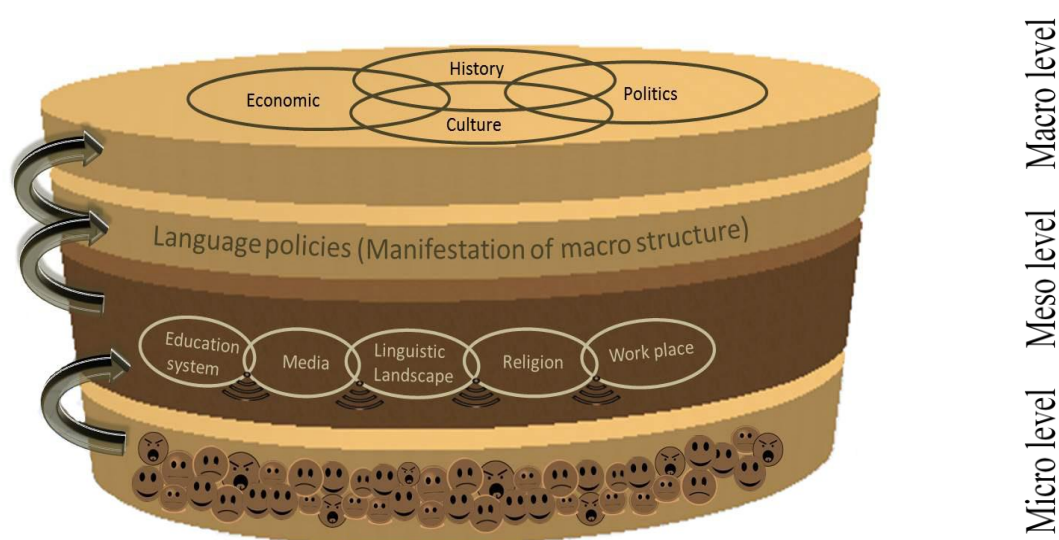



Figure 2.1: A proposed model of the interplay between language policy and language maintenance/shift

The model proposed here is an attempt to demonstrate why a minority group may stop using its ethnic language in different domains (in favor of dominant language(s)), and how that choice is influenced by language policy and planning activities as well as the macro sociopolitical, historical and economic structures within a nation-state. As mentioned above, the model is built on a number of theoretical frameworks, including the ecology of language paradigm and recent developments in the field of language policy and planning.

The ecology of language is taken here as an overarching paradigm to include every factor which might have an impact, directly or indirectly, on language use, including a wide range of factors at different scales and levels, such as socioeconomic, political, and historical structures at the macro level, as well as human agency at the meso (e.g. policy implementers) or micro (e.g. policy consumers) levels. Language is thus seen as embedded within a larger ecology (Nettle & Romaine, 2000) within my approach.

Language policy documents here are viewed as interventions into language ecologies (Liddicoat, 2013), which are themselves influenced by sociopolitical, historical and economic structures. The framework enables the researcher to examine both formal, declared and written language policies and informal, unwritten and undeclared ones in the analysis. As McCarthy (2011, p. 2) puts it, formal and written policies should not be dismissed, rather they need to be placed in "contexts as part of the larger sociocultural system." Referring to some kind of official text in defining policy alone, therefore, will cause the dehumanization, decontextualization, and dehistoricization of official state policies (McCarty, 2011, p. xii; Schiffman, 1996; Spolsky, 2004).

Given that policies, whatever their goals might be, are not directly transferred to people, but rather, they are mediated, interpreted, and enacted through and within intermediary domains and institutions such as education systems, the media, language in public space, etc. (Cincotta-Segi, 2011; Fairclough, 2011), the role of those intermediary institutions as LPP mechanisms (Shohamy, 2006) is taken into account here. As I argued above, the implementation of policies within these domains and institutions create and disseminate certain Discourses, i.e. ways of thinking and seeing the world, influence people's attitudes, and potentially their behavior, at the micro level (illustrated by ). Thus the use of the (upside down) wifi sign implies that the Discourses (re)produced at the institutional level, just like wifi signals which are invisible, are subtle and implicit making them hidden from the public eye. The model assumes space for local and micro level reactions, and agency and language activism (shown by different facial expressions and

arrows respectively) (e.g. see Sicoli, 2011). The use of arrows to represent agency means that agency at the grass roots level is often in the form of actions, e.g. forming NGOs, mother tongue schooling, establishing a television and radio channel, etc. However, as noted above, human agency and freedom is taken to be constrained by macro structures (Blommaert, 2005; Tollefson, 1991).

The model allows the researcher to investigate LPP processes at the macro level, while exploring and conducting "ethnography of language policy" (Canagarajah, 2006). "While LPP operates from the macro-level of state and international institutions, ethnography focuses on the micro level of interpersonal relationships, conversation, and everyday life" (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 153). It has been argued that the integration of micro-level research ("the sociolinguistics of language") with macro-level investigations ("the sociolinguistics of society") is likely to offer a more complete and satisfactory explanation for language behavior than is available at present (Kelly-Holmes, 2010; Ricento, 2000). Ethnography of language policy was, thus, proposed (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007) to, metaphorically speaking, "unpeel the layers of the LPP onion" (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). Ethnography of language policy makes it possible for the researcher to consider and examine "agents," "goals," "processes," "discourses which engender and perpetuate the policy," and "the dynamic social and historical contexts in which the policy exists" (Johnson, 2009, p. 144).

The model also considers "local actors' sense making in the implementation of policy" at the meso level (Levinson, et al., 2009, p. 780). Introducing "institutional ethnography," Levinson et al. believe that institutional structures and practices shape and organize everyday experience and the examination of such experience can shed light on the social dynamics of those institutions which are central to the formation of policy. Seeing policy as a practice of power, they argue that the ethnographic study of policy enables us "to see the practice that goes into creating and sustaining the sedimented common sense of policy and....to see the practice of policy appropriation, for which local interests and meanings (often in COP) provide the basis" (Levinson, et al., 2009, p. 789).

The model shows the complex interplay between the layers of language policy and planning, and how and through what mechanisms those LPP decisions are turned into practices, which might result in particular family language policies in the domain of home. In other words, it demonstrates that the domain of home and the interactions between family members in the home are under the constant influence of outside ecology. The mere reliance on the macro domains to make the intergenerational transmission take place while

ignoring the role of family has been criticized and likened to blowing air into a tire which has a puncture (Fishman, 1991, p. xii). This is not, however, to suggest the insignificance of those macro domains and their impact on language maintenance. If the mere reliance on the macro domains to maintain a language is like blowing air into a flat tire, we could liken the mere reliance on the domain of home to save or maintain a language to nails on the road which may cause a puncture in the tire. That is, it is wishful thinking to think languages can be maintained or saved only in the home without being recognized and used in macro domains. In other words, not only do languages need home as an important domain of language use, but they also need an *oikos* for survival, i.e. "a complex ecological support system" (Mühlhäusler, 1992, 1996). In other words, for a language to have its natural intergenerational transmission there needs to be a complex ecological support system. A language should be actively used in the ecology outside home. Otherwise, as Wang and Chong (2011) argue, the maintenance of languages which are used only in restricted settings, including home, is not optimistic. The lack of any of the ecological requirements, e.g. institutional support (Giles, et al., 1977) of a language can consequently have a detrimental effect on its survival. What is of paramount significance here is the fact that decisions as to what extent and to which group(s) and their language(s) institutional support should be provided is a political and ideological act (Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2009). This means that language ecologies can be governed by dominant groups which may result in better language maintenance among some communities, and faster language shift among others. Although nation-states' language policies do not access family units directly, the apparatuses they possess, e.g. the education system, media, language rules and regulations, etc., can Discursively shape particular language ecologies favoring dominant languages. Such ecologies, as I argue in this thesis, can ultimately lead to language shift among minority communities.

In more abstract terms, language policies can be viewed as a three-dimensional process in this framework which traverses and influences the dimension of time, space, and place simultaneously. Policies affect and are affected by time because, while being products of history, they are future-oriented (see Blommaert, 2005, about layered simultaneity). Policy documents tend to define a status in future for a particular group and its language(s) within a territory (dimension of place). Policies further influence space in the form of Discourses they create in the society. Such Discourses seem to be the strongest impact of policies because without successful Discourses planned policies tend to fail to achieve their goals.



In sum, the review of existing theoretical frameworks and paradigms in this chapter stresses that an integrationist approach to exploring language maintenance/shift processes in relation to language policy and planning of nation-states needs to be applied. This can better demonstrate how and through what mechanisms macro language policies dictated/advertised in domains outside the home may work their ways into the domain of home, resulting in a change in attitudes and perceptions in favor of the dominant language. Such a comprehensive analysis includes a study of grass-roots level practices and attitudes, macro state policies with respect to languages, and the mechanism and their functionality regarding those languages. This research in Tabriz, Iran attempts to address such issues by exploring grass-roots level behavior and attitudes in the domain of home with respect to Azeri and Farsi, the language policies in pre-schools and the media, a television channel, which is available to Azeri speakers as an institutional support.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The first part of the chapter reviewed the definition and causes of language maintenance/shift. It was argued the most common cause for language shift in this era is sociopolitical and cultural dominance of some groups over others. This part consequently situated the research as one viewing LPP as political and ideological which influences languages and their functions and vitality through impacting on their ecology. Distinguishing between (big 'D') Discourse and (small 'd') discourse within language policy research, the notion of Discourse planning was defined. It was suggested that the macro policies, intermediary domains and institutions, and micro grass roots level practices should be critically examined. It was argued that the domain of home, as the location for intergenerational transmission cannot and should not be considered in a vacuum. Rather, the external domains and institutions and macro sociopolitical and economic factors should be included in the analysis. This can provide a comprehensive picture of a given language contact situation within a state. Based on the gaps identified and suggestions made, research questions for the investigation of language shift in Tabriz have been developed. In the next chapter, the methodology to explore these research questions is discussed.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.0 Introduction**

Chapter two discussed the necessity of and need for understanding and systematic analysis of the relationship between macro and micro dimensions of language policy and planning as a perennial issue (Fishman, 1972a; Hornberger & Johnson, 2011; Hult, 2010a). An integrated model derived from a number of theoretical frameworks was then proposed to address this issue. In this chapter, I argue that operationalization of an integrated model requires that a variety of methods and techniques be used in research. That is, a mixed-methods approach needs to be taken. While mirroring the complexity and multidisciplinary of the field (Baldauf, 2002, p. 394), the "diversity of methods" (Kirk & Miller, 1986) used in language policy and planning (LPP) research enhances the validity of research findings or "inference quality" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). The validity of the findings are often augmented through triangulation which can include "data triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and investigator triangulation" (Brewer & Hunter, 2006; Deniz, 1970, 1989).

The underlying premise of triangulation, or "multiple operationalism" (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), as a design strategy is that all methods have their own limitations and biases, and, thus, using only one method to investigate a given phenomenon may yield biased results. Therefore, through triangulation, that is, "the use of multiple methods, with offsetting or counteracting biases" Greene et al. (1989, p. 256), the validity of inquiry results is enhanced. In other words, mixed methods research and the possibility of triangulation enable us to "attack a research problem with an arsenal of methods that have nonoverlapping weaknesses in addition to their complementary strengths" (Brewer & Hunter, 2006, p. 4).

This chapter describes the mixed methods approach used to address the research questions outlined in chapter two, concentrating on the qualitative and quantitative components, associated with phase one and phase two of data collection respectively. Different qualitative data collection instruments, namely, structured, semi-structured, and focus group interviews, case studies, and photographs (of linguistic landscapes), alongside a quantitative data collection instrument, a questionnaire, used to explore the macro-level policies alongside the micro-level practices and attitudes are discussed. Further, the

rationale and the design of the present mixed methods study and the data collection issues related to each approach, i.e. qualitative and quantitative approaches, are detailed in this chapter.

### **3.1 Mixed methods**

The research questions of this thesis are addressed by applying two types of approaches, i.e. qualitative and quantitative, sequentially in two phases. Phase one, i.e. the qualitative strand of the research (January 2011- June 2011), takes a broader perspective in describing the research context by collecting exploratory qualitative data in a range of contexts, public signage, education, broadcast media, and home. Photos were taken of language use pattern on public signage in Tabriz. In-depth and detailed data were also collected by interviewing fifty children as well as ten kindergarten authorities. Three case studies were undertaken as well to explore language practices in the home. The first phase of the research also involved a focus-group interview with six mothers of young children. The data from this stage of the research provided useful direction to the second phase of the data collection, i.e. designing and using a questionnaire to administer to 150 families later on in 2012. The second phase explored parents' attitudes towards the languages of Azeri, Farsi, and Turkish, the local channel of Tabriz, and their linguistic behavior in different domains. Below, the rationale for using the mixed methods approach and the advantages and challenges of such an approach are discussed.

### **3.2 Why a mixed methods approach?**

The mixed methods approach<sup>4</sup> has grown out of the idea that the historical schism within the social sciences between qualitative and quantitative research (Castro, Kellison, Boyd, & Kopak, 2010; Johnson & Gray, 2010) should be bridged and a truce should be established between the "paradigm warriors" (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Ending the "paradigm war" (Gage, 1989), mixed methods research designs were proposed in the hope that they offer strengths that counterbalance the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research, and act as an incentive for the researcher to use multiple paradigms (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

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<sup>4</sup> Mixed methods has been given different labels in the last three decades; e.g. "a methodological approach" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), "third methodological movement" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003), "a research paradigm" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), "the multiple ways of seeing and hearing" Greene (2007).

A paradigm is defined as "a conceptual model of a person's worldview, complete with the assumptions that are associated with that view" (Mertens, 2003, p. 139), or in Plowright's (2011) words, "a system of ideas or theoretical principles that determine, maintain and reinforce our way of thinking about an issue or a topic" (p. 177). It has been proposed that three major paradigms guide current research practices: positivist/postpositivist, interpretive/constructivist, and pragmatism and/or transformative/emancipatory (DeCuir-Gunby, 2008; Mertens, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). These paradigms underlie quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed methods research respectively. To use different methods and to advocate for a change for better language maintenance, the present study adopts a pragmatic and transformative/emancipatory paradigm as its underlying paradigm. Mixed methods research with its underlying paradigm(s), i.e. pragmatism and/or transformative/emancipatory, does not, however, dismiss positivism/postpositivism or constructivism. In fact, it attempts to make the most of these paradigms. In DeCuir-Gunby's terms, mixed methods is "the best of both worlds" (DeCuir-Gunby, 2008, p. 126). It is worth mentioning that pragmatism and transformative/emancipatory can be regarded as two separate paradigms in their own right as they allow and promote different functions in mixed methods research (see below).

Pragmatism as a "well-developed and attractive philosophy for integrating perspectives and approaches" (Johnson, et al., 2007) offers "historical strands and warrants for the new discourses of social science research, which embraces plurality of method and multiple methods philosophies" (Maxcy, 2003, p. 52). Further, as Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) assert, 'truth' for pragmatists is "what works" rather than "metaphysical truths." In other words, in pragmatism as the underlying paradigm for mixed methods research "only results count" (Maxcy, 2003, p. 85). That is, the researcher adopts the most appropriate methods and measures whichever paradigm or research traditions they are associated with. In this sense, pragmatism rejects "the incompatibility thesis" (Howe, 1988), i.e. that quantitative and qualitative research paradigms alongside their associated methods cannot and should not be mixed. Within pragmatism, the antagonism between paradigms is considered to be "unproductive" (Johnson, et al., 2007, p. 127), and the separation of the two approaches considered unhelpful (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2008). Basing his argument on the fact that the paradigms are not competing ones, Bergman (2010, p. 173) similarly argues that "if we were indeed faced with two competing paradigms, then it would not be possible to combine qualitative and quantitative elements within one research question."

Mixed methods research, therefore, is "an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints (always including the standpoints of qualitative and quantitative research)" (Johnson, et al., 2007, p. 113).

The second paradigm assumed in this research in tandem with pragmatism is transformative/emancipatory because the research aims to promote a change towards better language maintenance among a minority people and also promote greater social equity and justice (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). This is achieved by focusing on the lives of and experiences of those who suffer oppression and discrimination (Mertens, 2003). It is worth noting that these two paradigms, i.e. pragmatism and/or transformative/emancipatory, are not mutually exclusive and they can be applied alongside each other in a single study, although some advocate one over the other (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003).

Given the preceding discussion, this thesis adopts the definition proposed by Johnson et al. (2007). According to these authors, mixed method research is

....the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123).

This definition affords the use of mixed methods for two main purposes. Firstly, the definition emphasizes the shared fundamental tenet of the mixed methods researchers' community, that is, "a strict qualitative–quantitative dichotomy is not necessary or productive for answering research questions" (Tashakkori, 2009, p. 288), and "methods should be mixed in a way that has complementary strengths and nonoverlapping weaknesses" (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 299). This leads to the second affordance that the definition offers, i.e. "triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion" (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989, p. 255). Accordingly, this research applies four types of triangulation outlined by Deniz (1989), that is, (a) data triangulation, (b) theory triangulation, (c) methodological triangulation, and (d) investigator triangulation. It is worth noting, however, that due to the nature of PhD research, i.e. independent but supervised research, the fourth type of triangulation, namely, investigator triangulation, is relatively weak compared to other types of triangulation. Therefore, a

variety of sources and multiple methods will be used to triangulate the data, and multiple perspectives and theories will be used to interpret those data.

Although triangulation is used in research to cross-check the findings and achieve convergence, it can also yield inconsistent or contradictory outcomes. Whichever of the three outcomes prevails, the researcher can construct superior explanations of the observed social phenomena (Deniz, 1989), and produce a more complete picture (Morse, 2003). In a similar vein, Bergman (2011) argues that although mixed methods should be used in a way that convergence occurs between the qualitative components of the research and quantitative results, divergences in such a context can be also used to qualify the research findings. This enables the researcher applying mixed methods designs to "verify and generate theory in the same study" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 15), and "access knowledge or insights unavailable to a qualitative study and a quantitative study undertaken independently" (O'Cathain, Murphy, & Nicholl, 2007, p. 147).

Although the advantages of mixed methods outweigh the challenges, conducting this kind of research is not easy (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These challenges can act as a hindrance to the research. Because both qualitative and quantitative research are undertaken, the main challenge for the researcher in practice is to develop skills in both approaches (Molina-Azorín, 2011, p. 8). Furthermore, dealing with a variety of instruments to collect data from participants of different ages and positions requires careful consideration of ethical issues. The following section explores how ethical issues were addressed in this research.

### **3.3 Ethical issues**

The consideration of ethics as an essential part of the research plan in linguistics has gains a considerable amount of attention in the last 20 years. Questions such as "who undertakes research and in whose interest, who the research belongs to, who writes and gets credit for authorship, how public the findings are, and what effect and status they have" are considered important (Trechter, 2013, p. 35). As is appropriate for all research, the Human Ethics Committee (HEC) of Victoria University of Wellington requires that ethical approval be sought for research involving human participants. This is to ensure and protect the participants' right to privacy and autonomy. Ethical approval for this research, accordingly, was sought twice, before phase one and phase two of data collection in December 2010 and December 2011, respectively.

Phase one of the data collection (including the interviews with kindergarten authorities, interviews with children, a focus group interview, case studies, and collecting linguistic landscape data) was undertaken from January 2011 to June 2011. As a part of the HEC application for this phase, the interview questions and information sheets for both kindergarten authorities and children, were submitted for HEC approval in order to obtain "fully informed voluntary consent" (Gregory, 2003) from participants. In addition, consent forms to be signed by children's parents were designed so that the interviews could be undertaken with parents' permission (see Appendix Two). Information sheets clearly stated in Farsi (see chapter four and five for Azeris' literacy in Azeri and Farsi) what the goals, methods and processes of data collection of the research were. Participants were also reassured about their anonymity and the confidentiality of the information they provided.

Phase two of data collection began in February 2012. In this phase, an anonymous questionnaire designed on the basis of the focus group was administered. Before distributing the questionnaire, questions were submitted for HEC approval. Making sure of the anonymity of the questionnaire, questions were approved by the HEC committee. The anonymity of the questionnaire helped ensure the confidentiality, which in return encouraged the participants to take part in the research (Gregory, 2003). Questions focused on the participants' attitudes toward languages, and their language behavior in different domains (For full description, see below).

### **3.4 Data collection instruments**

The following sections explore the qualitative and quantitative strands of the data collection. The sections are ordered in a way that corresponds to following chapters (chapters 4-7). The data collection in kindergartens is presented first; this set of data is analyzed in chapter four. Next, linguistic landscape data collection process is discussed; the analysis of this set of data is presented in chapter five. The section is later followed by the data collected through interviews with children and the data collected on the local channel in Tabriz (Sahand TV); the analysis of this set of data is presented in chapter six. The final section discusses how case studies were carried out, and how the questionnaire was designed. This set of data is analyzed in chapter seven.

### **3.4.1 Interviews with kindergarten authorities**

Authorities and principals of ten kindergartens in Tabriz were interviewed in order to explore language policies within the domain of education. To access kindergarten authorities, the "friend of a friend" approach (Milroy, 1980) was used. Hence, I was introduced to the first kindergarten authority by a friend who arranged my first meeting with one of the kindergarten authorities. I was then introduced by the first interviewee to her colleagues. This chain of introduction continued until I had interviewed authorities in ten kindergartens. The process went smoothly because the first interviewee was a member of a decision-making committee (see chapter four), which made accessing the other nine kindergartens relatively easy. Appointments for the interviews with the other nine kindergartens were made by phone. All the interviews were undertaken in Azeri because Azeri is considered and spoken as an oral language on a daily basis. The interviews were conducted within the kindergartens enabling me to undertake brief observations as well. For example, while I was interviewing in one of the kindergartens, a mother with her child came into the office. The dynamics of language contact and change could be observed in the interactions between the child, the mother, and the manager of the kindergarten. While the mother and the manager spoke in Azeri, the child was addressed in Farsi by both the mother and manager. Such observations, though brief and spontaneous, provided additional insights concerning the role that these kindergartens play in language change.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with kindergarten authorities because this type of interview makes it possible for the participants to speak about what they find salient rather than the researcher dictating the direction of the interview, as would be in the structured approaches (Barbour, 2008). They also give the researcher just enough latitude to probe into issue using follow-up questions while staying on the track. The interview schedule was devised to include questions mainly regarding the presence or absence of national or regional policies (see Appendix Two). In the case of the absence of such policies, the authorities were asked about the internal *de facto* policies within the kindergarten regarding language choice as the medium of instruction. Before each interview, I briefly outlined the general purposes of the research, and reassured the interviewees of the confidentiality of the material collected attempting to encourage them to talk freely about the issues raised in the interviews. This was very important in order to earn their trust and elicit valid information. Nonetheless, some participants were still concerned about the information they revealed due to the sensitivity of language policies in



general. This posed challenges in obtaining the information in some instances. In such cases, follow-up questions were raised. The most common area in which those follow-up questions were used concerned the presence of clear language policy as to which language should be used as the medium of instruction. In the case of not receiving a clear answer, the question was broken down into questions such as "are there any language policies online you are aware of?" or "have you received any recommendations from a governmental organization as to which language you should use in the classroom?" The recorded data was later transferred into the computer for transcription and analysis. The data analysis of this set of data is presented in chapter five.

### **3.4.2 Linguistic landscape data**

Language in public signage (linguistic landscapes) has gained considerable attention in sociolinguistic studies. Serving two basic functions of "informational" and "symbolic," linguistic landscape acts as an indicator of the relative power and status of the linguistic communities in a particular territory, and is considered important in language policy and planning literature as it has the capacity to reveal valuable information about the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups residing in multilingual settings (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). It is argued that language in the environment is not arbitrary and it delivers messages about societies, people, the economy, policy, class, identities, multilingualism, etc. (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). In this research, linguistic landscape data was collected in the hope that it may shed more light on the language contact situation in Tabriz, Iran.

The main challenge with collecting linguistic landscape data, as Gorter and Cenoz note, was "sampling and representativity" (Gorter & Cenoz, 2008, p. 352), that is, which street(s) or neighborhood(s) I should choose in order to present a representative picture of the linguistic landscape of the city (see also Androutsopoulos, 2014). The challenge was a serious one considering the size of the city of around two million people living in Tabriz. Hence, I first mapped out the streets taking notes of which streets or areas might best offer a typical picture of the linguistic landscape situation. My notes consisted of information about the different types of signs, e.g. traffic signs, shop windows, graffiti, etc., and language use patterns relating to each type. Nearly all public signage in different regions in the city had the same linguistic pattern, Farsi and English being the two dominant languages. Three streets in the downtown area were finally selected as the research setting; there were several schools in that area. The premise underlying such a choice was the potential impact of linguistic landscape on children's attitudes and ideologies (see chapter

five). Having identified the streets, I started taking photos of any written signs on those streets. I undertook the photo-taking task on public holidays when streets were not busy. Three hundred and seventy photos, including photos of shop windows, traffic signs, graffiti, personal notes, and anything written aimed at a public audience, were captured and counted. The data was later transferred into the computer for analysis. The analysis of this data set is presented in chapter five illuminating language policies and linguistic behavior of Azeris regarding language use within a written domain.

### **3.4.3 Data from Sahand TV**

Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) is a state-run corporation. Studying language use patterns in the programs broadcast through such a corporation can consequently reveal attitudes and ideologies of the government towards languages. Similar to the domain of linguistic landscape, the main methodological issue here was also sampling reliable data. Because there was a great deal of available material for collection, i.e. programs broadcast every day, decisions needed to be made about what and when to record. To collect data on Sahand TV, a local channel for Azeris, a "constructed week sampling for content analysis" was selected as an efficient sampling method (Hester & Dougall, 2007). The data was collected for a period of seven weeks. One day from each week was selected for recording programs on Sahand TV. Such a sampling method is believed to yield an objective representative of the content for analysis (see Hester & Dougall, 2007, for a comparison of sampling methods for content analysis). This method of data collection was important for this research because the type of programs vary on days associated with certain religious and cultural events and ceremonies. Recording programs over a single week could have resulted in a biased data set. To ensure that recording took place without interruptions, I stayed home and regularly checked on the television and computer which were doing the recording. The analysis of Sahand TV programs are presented in chapter six.

### **3.4.4 Interviews with Children**

It has been argued that because many children develop ideologies and certain attitudes about languages at a young age, collecting data from children can provide evidence for incipient change (Pfaff, 1990). Examining children's ideologies about languages may arguably provide useful information about the nature of this change (Queen, 2003). To investigate children's attitudes, structured interviews were used.

Interviews are often considered to be a very effective means of eliciting "relevant, valuable, and analytically rich data" (Barbour, 2008, p. 114). Face-to-face, structured interviews were, thus, selected as the most appropriate method to elicit in-depth information from fifty children in this research. These young schoolchildren were studying English at different English institutes. To avoid any potential biased data, they were chosen from different areas of the city from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Other information-eliciting techniques such as questionnaires were not used in this case because of the difficulty of administering questionnaires to young children.

I undertook pilot-tests for my questions in the interview protocol (see Nunan, 1992; Oppenheim, 1992, for piloting). This allowed me to learn whether the questions elicit the type of information I expected to obtain or not before undertaking the research with the target participants. To achieve such a goal, having devised the interview questions, I e-mailed them to a colleague in Tabriz where he was able to pilot the questions in the context of the research with four children with the same characteristics as the target participants. Having received positive feedback on the questions regarding their capacity to yield valuable information, I was satisfied that the questions elicited the information I hoped to collect.

Fifty (seven to twelve year-old) children were interviewed in Azeri. As mentioned above, these children were students at a language school in Tabriz, Iran. Before the interviews started, consent forms were sent to each child's parents asking for permission to have an interview with the child (see Appendix Two). Having received permission from the parents, each child was allocated a specific date and time.

To avoid any stress during the interviews and establish good "verbal and non-verbal rapport" (Fiksdal, 1988; Spencer-Oatey, 2008) with the children, two measures were taken; one before the interviews and the other during the interviews. Before the interviews, I attended the children's classes for a few sessions. The teacher introduced me as a friend and a researcher. This enabled me to establish good rapport with children even before the interviews started. The other measure which was a great aid in putting children at ease was their teacher's presence during the interviews. Each interview lasted about five minutes, and all the interviews were recorded for further analysis. The only challenge in this stage of data collection was having enough willing participants. Some parents displayed skepticism. One family called the institute asking about the identity of the interviewer and the confidentiality of the information despite reading the information

sheet. She was reassured by the manager of the institute about the issues she was concerned about. Finally, 50 participants were willing to be interviewed.

### **3.4.5 Case studies**

Case studies offer interesting and real-world insightful information allowing researchers to find a balance between theory and practice, and enabling researchers to see "what is going on" as an ethnographer in the research setting (Wolcott, 2008). These ethnographic observations were conducted to study "how the members of [Azeri] community behave and why they behave in that way" (Levon, 2013, p. 69). Three case studies were carried out to demonstrate the dynamics of family language policy in the domain of the home, and illuminate how and to what degree parents' and children's choices and decisions are influenced by the ecology outside the home. Undertaking case studies and complementing the findings with data from an attitude questionnaire (see below) in this research was based on the premise that there could be a discrepancy between parents' reported attitudes and beliefs and their actual behavior in the home (Yu, 2010).

The cases in this research were selected on the basis of their availability in a "convenience sample" (Nunan, 1992). To reduce the effects of the "observer's paradox," (Labov, 1972), those cases were selected through my network of close friends and relatives. Helping reducing the effects of observer's paradox, the slight familiarity with the family and child in advance typically put the child at ease soon after the first meeting. This encouraged the child to act in my presence as he/she normally did, thus allowing the collection of valuable data.

Ethnographic research is often conducted through "prolonged observation" (Levon, 2013). In this research, however, case studies served as a tool to triangulate the main data sets collected through interviews and the questionnaire, providing a richer account of the language contact situation in Tabriz (see Duff, 2008). Each family was thus observed in their home during three days for only about 2 hours each day. The observation focused on the linguistic behavior of the child in relation to the people around him/her as well as the broadcasting media, especially television. Because the families did not consent to audio or video-recording, I had to take notes of what was going on. Note-taking was a challenge around these children. Because I was sometimes involved in a game with the child and could not take notes of what was happening on the spot, I needed to write my detailed description afterwards. Taking notes was more difficult with one of the children in particular. Because she was six years old, and attended a pre-school, she was quite aware

of me taking notes of what she was doing. To avoid unnatural and biased data, I adopted the same strategy of writing a description after the observation ended. Because of the older age of this child compared to the other two, who were both four, I was also careful not to talk about my research in front of the child.

While case studies provided in-depth insights into attitudes and behavior of parents and children in the home, they could not be generalized to a larger population (Woodside, 2010). To address this gap, the research utilized an attitude questionnaire which was administered to 150 parents of young children.

### **3.4.6 An attitude questionnaire: A quantitative measure**

Quantitative approaches, unlike qualitative approaches, are used in research so that the researcher can generalize the findings and examine the interplay between the variables (Castro, et al., 2010). This allows the researcher using a mixed methods design to compensate for the shortcomings associated with the qualitative approach. This is achieved by quantitative measures producing "numerical" (Plowright 2011), "objective and generalizable" data (Nunan, 1992). In metaphorical terms, by mixing "hard" and "soft" data (Nunan, 1992, p.3), the researcher enjoys greater latitude in the analysis and interpretation of the data and findings.

An attitude questionnaire was used in this research as a quantitative measure (see Appendix One). It was designed to gather three types of data, namely "factual, behavioral, and attitudinal" (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2010). Attitudinal questions addressed the three basic aspects of attitudes, namely cognitive, affective and behavioral (Albarracin, Johnson, & Zanna, 2005; Garrett, 2010). The three aspects respectively concerned Azeri parents' beliefs about languages and language policies, the extent to which they approve or disapprove of language(s) and/or policies, and how they report they act with respect to particular language(s) and/or policies. Questions focused on eliciting the parents' attitudes towards the official language of Farsi, the mother tongue of Azeri and other languages such as Turkish in Tabriz, Iran. It was also designed to find out what linguistic practices the respondents reported for different domains. The questionnaire was administered in Farsi rather than Azeri to insure a higher response rate. Administering questionnaires in Azeri could have decreased the number of questionnaires completed and returned by parents because of Azeris' low reading and writing proficiency in Azeri (see chapter four and five). A focus group interview preceded the questionnaire which assisted with designing relevant questions.

### 3.4.6.1 Focus group interview<sup>5</sup>

Interviews, either individual or group interviews, often precede or follow questionnaires to develop ideas or triangulate research findings (Oppenheim, 1992). A focus group interview or "a thinking society in miniature" (Markova, Linell, Grossen, & Orvig, 2007) was, thus, used in this research to develop ideas to prepare a questionnaire in the later stages of the research. By producing qualitative data, focus group interviews allow the researcher not only to learn why an issue is important but also what is salient about it (Litosseliti, 2003). The aim in such interviews is to collect data on group beliefs and norms regarding a particular topic or set of issues through the capture of intra-group interaction (Bloor & Wood, 2006), and explore people's behavior and attitudes on "issues largely taken for granted" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Focus group interviews, as "a method of least resistance," are arguably well-suited for such purposes, as people feel more comfortable to express their attitudes and feeling when they are in a group (see Barbour, 2008).

The interview schedule was prepared in the light of research questions of the thesis. Because the questionnaire aimed to tap into the respondents' attitudes and their linguistic behavior in different domains of home, education, and media, the focus group interview protocol contained general questions germane to these issues. The focus group consisted of six mothers of young children. I managed to recruit the participants from a language school, where parents waited for their children's class to be over to pick them up. With the consent of authorities of the language school, I was introduced to the parents by one of the assistants. The interview was conducted in one of the free classes and lasted forty-five minutes. Before the interview began, I provided a brief description of the research and reassured the participants of the confidentiality of their identities. The participants felt very comfortable when they were assured that their names were not required. The discussions during the interview were audio-recorded for analysis. The only issue, of which I later became aware, was caused by the room where the interview took place. Because the room was not carpeted, the respondents' voices echoed making it difficult to transcribe the data. However, the issue was not a hindrance to data analysis because a detailed word-for-word transcription was not required for this section of the research.

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<sup>5</sup> The focus group interview was carried out in the first phase of data collection. However, the focus group interview is discussed in this section since it was used in this thesis as an instrument which assisted with designing the questionnaire.

The analysis of the focus group data provided some clues to designing the attitude questionnaire. In terms of the domains of language use, parents explicitly talked about the influence of satellite channels, especially Turkish channels, on their children's linguistic behavior, the impact of Farsi-only education system on their own behavior in the home, and so on. These issues were included in the questionnaire in the form of different questions (multi-item scales).

### **3.4.6.2 Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are the most commonly used data collection instruments (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2010). Questionnaires are known for being relatively easy to analyze, but difficult to construct. There are various challenges which the researcher needs to anticipate before he/she uses a questionnaire. Designing questions, the effect of ordering questions, and reliability are the most important issues which are briefly discussed below.

#### **3.4.6.2.1 Designing questions**

Although it seems a very easy task to write questions for a questionnaire, in practice turns out to be very tricky (Schleef, 2014). There are a lot of challenges which the researcher should be ready to face and solve. The first is to make a decision on the type of questions to be used in the questionnaire, that is, closed-ended questions and/or open-ended questions. Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages, with the main ones being ease of construction and coding problems. Closed-ended questions are hard to construct but easy to analyze while the open-ended questions are easier to construct but hard to code and analyze. The questionnaire in this research used mainly closed-ended questions with a few open-ended questions. Open ended questions were designed to elicit demographic information making them easy to code and analyze.

Another challenge in questionnaire design is the context effects, that is, "differences in people's responses to attitudinal questions brought about by changes in the form, wording, or sequencing of the questions" (Rimal & Real, 2005). Loaded questions, double-barrel questions, and questions longer than twenty words need to be avoided so as to be able to collect valid data. Dornyei & Taguchi (2010) suggest that questions should address only one issue at a time, and they should not exceed twenty words; otherwise, they may cause confusion and accordingly produce invalid data.

Because question wording and the order of questions appearing on a questionnaire can affect participants' responses (Benton & Daly, 1993; Bradburn & Mason, 1964;

Dornyei & Taguchi, 2010; Oppenheim, 1992; Schleef, 2014), multi-item scales were designed for investigating Azeris' attitudes towards languages in different domains. A multi-item scale is composed of at least four differently-worded questions (items) addressing the same issue (e.g. attitudes towards a language) (Schleef, 2014). One major challenge in making such scales is that different question orders can yield different responses. Although the degree and seriousness to which the impact question orders might have on responses is a topic of debate (see Schuman and Presser, 1981), I tried to reduce the potential effects of the question order by clearly separating the questions addressing the same issue from each other, in the hope that the respondents would not readily associate similar questions. Such an impact, if occurs, can reduce the internal consistency of the questionnaire, i.e. reliability (Schuman & Presser, 1981).

#### **3.4.6.2.2 Reliability**

The challenges discussed above can bring about a major setback for questionnaires, namely producing a questionnaire with unreliable results. Reliability, i.e. the consistency of the results (Oppenheim, 1992; Nunan, 1992) is considered to be the most significant issue in questionnaires quantitatively analyzed. In such questionnaires, reliability is tested by doing a factor analysis and calculating Cronbach's Alpha using a statistical package such as SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha is an index between .00 and 1 which indicates to what extent a particular item in the questionnaire correlates with other similar items. Cronbach's Alpha more than 0.70 calculated for a questionnaire means the questionnaire enjoys acceptable reliability (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2010). After piloting the questionnaire with a small sample, the data is fed into the program, and Cronbach's Alpha is then calculated. The Cronbach's Alpha for each set of questions is cited where the results are reported (e.g. in chapter seven).

#### **3.4.6.2.3 Piloting the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was ready to be piloted in January 2012. I e-mailed it to a colleague to pilot it with the participants similar to the target participants, that is, parents of young children. Unfortunately I could not undertake the piloting myself due to the long distance and high costs of traveling between New Zealand and Iran. The answers were fed into SPSS for preliminary analysis.

The analysis indicated high reliability for most of the domains. A factor analysis was also run to examine the internal consistency of the questions. The analysis of Likert



Scale questions yielded satisfactory results. The major issue involved the Semantic Differential questions. Semantic differential questions ask participants to mark on a continuum between two opposing adjectives. The analysis clearly showed participants' inability and/or indifference to understand and answer those questions. Semantic Differential questions were consequently removed from the questionnaire. Some modifications were also made to factual questions at the end of the questionnaire.

#### **3.4.6.2.4 Questionnaire administration**

Since the questionnaire was to be completed by parents of young children, I contacted some schools and language institutes where young children were studying. Some of those schools and institutes allowed the research to take place in their schools after I discussed my research topic with them. Having received their consent, I gave the questionnaires to teachers working in those schools and institutes. They were well-informed of the procedure. They were asked to provide each child with a questionnaire and ask them to bring back the completed questionnaire in a week. Since an information sheet was available on the questionnaire (see Appendix One), no more explanation was given to children. 150 questionnaires were returned in three weeks, out of which 107 were complete and used in the analysis. The remaining 43 questionnaires were excluded because they were incomplete.

In sum, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach to investigate complex social issues, that is language policies, language practices and language shift/maintenance, which is in practice translated into two approaches of qualitative and quantitative measures. The qualitative strand of the research made use of a structured-interview with children, a semi-structured interview with kindergarten authorities, a focus-group interview with six parents of young children, three case studies, and photos of public signage whereas the quantitative strand included an attitude questionnaire. Providing "narrative" data (Plowright, 2011), the qualitative data enabled me to examine "the 'whole person' holistically within that person's natural environment," (Castro et al., 2010) which allowed in-depth analysis of complex human issues. According to Castro et al. (2010, p. 342), qualitative approaches have the capacity to produce "rich detailed accounts of human experiences (emotions, beliefs, and behaviors)." The main challenge in such approaches, however, is ungeneralizability of the findings or what Bloor and Wood (2006) call "the sacrifice of reliability in pursuit of validity," which is offset by using quantitative approaches in mixed methods. Bloor and Wood (2006) argue that in interviews, for

example, the researcher sacrifices "standardization and repeatability" between interviews to understand "more fully the social meanings of the respondent's world" (Bloor & Wood, 2010, p. 104). This thesis has made use of quantitative measure, namely a questionnaire, to counterbalance the weaknesses associated with qualitative approaches.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has described the approach and the data collection instruments used in this thesis. It was argued that the most appropriate method to investigate complex sociolinguistic issues is mixed methods, that is, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. To make this possible, the research assumes a pragmatic and transformative-emancipatory paradigm in using mixed methods. It is pragmatic in that it holds that the compatibility thesis holds true and methods can be and most of the time should be mixed to answer complex social questions; and, it is transformative-emancipatory in that it aims to promote social equity and justice in a language contact situation.

Complex social phenomenon such as language policies and language shift require different kinds of methods so as to best understand and make inferences about these complexities. Such social phenomenon cannot be fully understood using either purely quantitative or qualitative techniques as they look into the issues from only one perspective which is oftentimes limited and biased. We need a variety of data sources and analyses to fully understand complex multifaceted institutions or realities. Mixed methods can provide such a toolbox (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2003). As Bergman (2010) notes, "mixed methods research is eminently suited for exploring variations in the construction of meaning of concepts in relation to how respondents, for instance, make sense of their experiences or report on attitudes in interviews or questionnaires, respectively" (Bergman, 2010, p. 172).

The chapter has further described different qualitative and quantitative methods used in this thesis to collect different data sets in different domains and institutions. Structured-interviews with children, semi-structured-interviews with kindergarten authorities, photos of public signage, data from broadcast media, and an attitude questionnaire and the challenges associated with each method were explained in this chapter.

The next chapter presents an analysis of interviews with kindergarten authorities regarding language policies in these institutions.

## **Chapter Four: The Education System: A Discourse Planning Mechanism**

### **4.0 Introduction**

The education system is believed to be one of the strongest policy devices (Shohamy, 2006, 2008), if not the key one (see May, 2008a, 2012b), which has historically played a significant role both in nation-building and language maintenance endeavors (Wright, 2012). The education system as a strong Discourse planning device, i.e. a site where particular attitudes and views about languages and groups are (re)produced, is so effective that some have argued that "schools often leave no room for resistance" (Shohamy, 2009, p. 186). Schools (and preschools and kindergartens, by extension) are said to reflect the values and priorities of the dominant group, and produce the status and power differences between groups (Cummins, 1988, p. 130). The presence or absence of languages, and attitudes towards languages in the education system can then arguably play a significant role in language maintenance/shift processes (Brown, 2012, p. 282; Jones, 2012), especially when those attitudes are shaped at the early stages of the lifespan, making them relatively unlikely to change (Garrett, Coupland, & Williams, 2003, p. 5). This chapter accordingly explores the dynamics of language policy in kindergartens in Tabriz as the first of three domains to be discussed, i.e. the education system (chapter four), linguistic landscapes (chapter five), and broadcast media (chapter six).

This chapter presents a picture of language and ethnic minority policy with respect to Azeri education in Tabriz from its official articulation to its local enactment. Using the "policy as text, discourse, and performance" model (Lo Bianco, 2005, 2008c, 2012a) (see chapter two), the chapter first examines the key policy documents, in this case the three Articles from the Iranian Constitution, for mainly one reason, namely the kindergarten principals' reference to language policies outlined in the Iranian Constitution in their interviews. Articles 15, 16, and 19 of the Constitution are macro formal language laws about the official language and minority languages in Iran (policy as text). Although the impact of "language laws and officiality" on language practices is neither "guaranteed nor consistent" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 8), they bestow different functions, statuses, and values on different languages, defining a set of possibilities for languages and their speakers. The legitimization of particular languages can play a significant part in empowering certain groups and disempowering others which might result in acceleration or deceleration of language maintenance/shift among groups.

Having introduced these language laws, I will present the data from interviews with kindergarten authorities in Tabriz (policy as discourse) demonstrating what the policy implementers' attitudes and ideologies are on the ground. The analysis shows how macro policies, inferred from the Constitutional Articles, are interpreted and mediated by preschool authorities at the meso level, revealing policy implementers' attitudes and perceptions about languages (Azeri and Farsi). This is important because such an investigation can lead us to "the nature of their language policy" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 8). Finally, discussing 'policy as performance' with respect to the preschools in Tabriz, the role of the education system in planning Discourse(s) is discussed.

#### **4.1 Language laws: Policy as text**

The texts selected for analysis as part of the present study include Articles 15, 16, and 19 of the Iranian Constitution<sup>6</sup>. These are the written macro policies about ethnic minority languages and linguistic human rights in Iran. They provide a good starting point as they show what status has been legally bestowed upon different languages in the multilingual and multiethnic country of Iran. They can clarify how minority languages are treated, whether they are promoted, tolerated, or suppressed (Sheyholislami, 2012).

The right of minority peoples to use and develop their native languages and writing systems has been constitutionally guaranteed in Iran:

*Article 15:*

*The official language and script of Iran, the lingua franca of its people, is Persian. Official documents, correspondence, and texts, as well as text-books, must be in this language and script. However, the use of regional and tribal languages in the press and mass media, as well as for teaching of their literature in schools, is allowed in addition to Persian.*

Giving Farsi the role of a lingua franca in Iran, Article 15 acknowledges Iran's multilingual and multiethnic make-up, and suggests that the country needs a common language so that its people can communicate with each other. Farsi is also designated as the only official language of the country giving it a higher status compared to all other languages. Furthermore, the Article legitimates the provision of institutional support for minority languages in the form of using minority languages in the media and the education system.

Particular attention has been paid to writing in Farsi. The Article stresses that all types of official writing including all correspondences, documents, textbooks, etc. must be

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<sup>6</sup> The English translation of the Iranian Constitution is available at <http://www.iranonline.com/iran/iran-info/Government/constitution.html>

carried out in Farsi. One explanation for the emphasis on writing in Farsi can be an attempt to strengthen national identity and unity. As Sebba (2006, p. 100) argues, the selection of a particular orthography over others can be considered a political and ideological process symbolizing battles over aspects of national, regional, and ethnic identity (cf. Rosowsky, 2010). Because Iran is a multiethnic country with different regional ethnic minorities, it could be argued that writing all the official documents, textbooks, forms, etc. in Farsi plays an important role in unifying all the groups. As a result, Iran is represented as one country with one writing system, and perhaps with one language, and one national identity.

According to Article 15, teaching minority languages and their presence in the mass media besides Farsi is "allowed." Although the Article does not specify the language of instruction in schools, as Sheyholislam (2012) writes, it can be readily inferred that "when 'text-books' are required to be in Persian then education must be through the medium of Persian" (p. 31). Moreover, the Article does not make any reference to teaching non-Persian languages as a subject. Nor does it provide any provisions about rights of minority people to use their language in administration and public services. Sheyholislam (2012) argues that because a state's administrative work predominantly depends on written texts and Article 15 is very specific that such texts should be in Farsi, the situation for minority languages in Iran is similar to monarchy's era (see chapter one). Farsi is thus implicitly treated as the "ideal" language for education, development, etc. (see Phillipson, 1988, pp. 341-342) for all Iranians regardless of what ethnicities they come from. This may arguably result in a weaker ethnic identity and social integration, and language shift among minorities.

Zhou (2000) argues that communities with their own writing systems may have a stronger sense of identity and social integration which may bring about "passive resistance" to the use of non-native scripts in schools and communities. Minority communities with little or no history of L1 writing system usage, by contrast, are more open to an L2 writing system (p. 145). The choice of a certain language, in this case Farsi, as *the* and not *a*, medium of instruction or the language of initial literacy for all in a multilingual countries necessarily advantages the speakers of that language over the speakers of other languages (Mangubhai, 2002, p. 492). This particular language of instruction, especially if it plays a role in upward socioeconomic mobility, can consequently endanger minority languages because it is seen as a more (instrumentally) valuable language.

Literacy is regarded as one of the most decisive factors influencing the fate of languages (Tacelosky, 2001). Literacy in a minority language is said to provide a range of advantages for minorities. Given the sociopolitical marginalized status of minority languages, Hirvonen (2008, p. 38), for instance, argues that minority children should be educated in their own language because their language does not enjoy the opportunities for use and development in the society. The least benefit of such education for minority people will be having language skills and becoming functionally bilingual which, as Spolsky (2008b, p. 152) notes, can play a role in the mobilization of ethnic movements, preserving the passive knowledge of the language, contributing to the sense of identity and connection to tradition, and providing "a reservoir tappable in the special conditions of successful re-use of the language" (Spolsky, 2008b, p. 158). Literacy potentially provides more uses and functions such as in employment, leisure reading, and use of the language in public space as well as assisting with the construction, maintenance and transmission of ethnic identity (Avni, 2011). Any languages whose speakers lack literacy are considered endangered because lack of literacy or a written standard in a language, e.g. the case of Swiss German vs. High/standard German, is highly likely to prevent the language from spreading to non-oral domains (Grin & Korth, 2005).

Reviewing research into minority language education, Mangubhai (2002) also writes that the benefits of literacy in L1 and its positive impact on subsequent literacy in L2 cannot be neglected. As Mangubhai (2002) notes, research has shown no negative impact of literacy in L1 on literacy in L2; rather, the reverse is true. In contexts where minority children are required to begin their literacy in L2, Mangubhai (2002, p. 493) argues that the outcome depends on non-school-based factors such as the particular language and cultural background, and how minorities view themselves and are viewed by the larger society (cf. Driessen, Slik, & Bot, 2002; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997).

Given the importance of literacy, communities that do not receive literacy in their language(s) have been likened to a colonized community. These languages are seen to possess a lower status and noneconomic functions. In such situations, the dominant language becomes the key to "to educational wisdom, employment and wealth" (Baker, 2002, p. 232), and, consequently, "education determines access to influence (Phillipson, 1988, p. 344), and an instrument to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class which is usually done by channeling "youth into status and occupational roles that support the existing power structure" (p. 212).

Although Article 15 has defined a desirable environment for languages in Iran, that is acknowledging multilingualism and "allowing" institutional support for minorities in the form of literacy and/or their presence in the media, the extent to which, if any, as well as how this policy is implemented in reality needs to be investigated. Before exploring the implementation of this policy, another Article relevant to minorities in Iran is examined below.

*Article 19:*

*All people of Iran, whatever the ethnic group or tribe to which they belong, enjoy equal rights; and color, race, language, and the like, do not bestow any privilege.*

Article 19 provides a framework for protecting human and linguistic rights. The Article states that all Iranians should have equal rights, and no discrimination is allowed based on color, race, or language. The Article shows the government's commitment not to make language, race, color, and such factors as a basis for discrimination. As Paul writes, the assertion that in Islam, and thus in the Islamic Republic of Iran, "the question of border, colour, language and race doesn't exist" seemed to be an indispensable constituent of the IRI narrative (Paul, 1999, p. 209). For linguistic rights to be respected, however, governments would need to provide ethnic minorities with facilities, such as text books in minority languages, teacher training centers to train and prepare teachers for teaching those languages, etc. (May, 2007, 2011, 2012b). None of these has been provided for minority languages in Iran leaving this Article of the Constitution neglected (Hassanpour, et al., 2012). As a consequence, this Article can be claimed not to have achieved its apparent goal, i.e. social and linguistic justice based on equal language rights. "The illusion of freedom" created by Article 15 and 19 which ostensibly advocate diversity and multilingualism but take a monolingual approach in practice is seen one of the most influential ways to produce ideological hegemony that will be in the interest of the dominant powers in the society (van Dijk, 2008, p. 11).

Article 16 is specifically about Arabic which will be discussed very briefly here as it is beyond the scope of this thesis.

*Article 16:*

*Since the language of the Qur'an and Islamic texts and teachings is Arabic, and since Persian literature is thoroughly permeated by this language, it must be taught after elementary level, in all classes of secondary school and in all areas of study.*

Arabic seems to have gained this special attention because of its association with Islam and the holy book of Qur'an. Given that only two percent of Iranian population speaks Arabic (CIA Factbook), Article 16, rather than promoting a particular minority language, apparently aims to strengthen and increase the liturgical value of Arabic in Iran by providing Iranians with the linguistic skills to enable them to engage with Islamic texts and literature (see Paul, 1999, pp. 210-211). How this policy is implemented and what teachers and students' attitudes are towards Arabic and other languages in schools is beyond the scope of this study and subject to further research. However, there is anecdotal evidence that English is favored far more than Arabic in Iranian schools although English has not been legally supported in the Constitution.

In sum, as discussed above, minority linguistic rights are officially guaranteed in the Constitution, while choosing Farsi, the official language of the country, as the language of all official texts including textbooks. To find out how these policies are mediated by the education system, and to what extent this has had an influence on Azeris at the grass roots level, the analysis, as noted in chapter two, should go beyond the written policy. The attitudes, beliefs and ideologies of those involved in policy enactment should be investigated. To this end, the following section presents and discusses the data collected through interviews with pre-school authorities in Tabriz.

## **4.2 Interviews with kindergarten authorities: Policy as discourse**

Following Gee (1999, 2011), Mumby and Mease (2011), Alvesson and Karreman (2005), and Fairhurst and Putnam (2004), this thesis, as noted in chapter two, distinguishes between discourse (with a small 'd') and Discourse (with a capital 'D'). (Big 'D') 'D'iscourse refers to "general and enduring systems of thoughts" whereas 'd'iscourse is defined as "talk and text in social practices" (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004, p. 8). Using this distinction, the following sections examine policy as discourse, and Discourse planning respectively with regard to the education system.

Organizations and institutions, such as education systems, are viewed as "discursive constructions." In other words, discourse is seen as "constitutive of organizing" which needs to be considered in investigations (Mumby & Mease, 2011, p. 283; see also Alvesson & Karreman, 2005; Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). Including and exploring discourse, i.e. discussions about policies, in policy analysis can yield "the precise interpretation of the intended language policy, its level of seriousness or otherwise, covert messages it carries or conceals" (Lo Bianco, 2008c, p. 168). Supplementing formal



language policy analyses with other sources of information such as "analysis of the discourses and interests of key players" can improve the critical orientation towards language policies which can help us understand how formal policies are to be "interpreted, evaluated and enacted" (Lo Bianco, 2008c, p. 168).

This section presents results of an analysis of ten face-to-face interviews with pre-schools (kindergartens) in Tabriz supplemented with brief observations. Kindergartens rather than primary or secondary schools were selected for two main reasons. Firstly, instruction in these kindergartens and preschools is essentially conducted in the form of oral interactions between teachers and students. Because there are no written texts involved in education at this level, this potentially provides space to defy Farsi-only textbooks and instruction in higher levels. That is, minorities like Azeris can potentially use their language in instruction. Secondly, the majority of kindergartens and preschools in Tabriz accept children as young as one year old. Given the long hours that children stay in these institutes (as long as eight hours), they can play an important role in formation of particular attitudes and linguistic behavior in young children.

The main interview questions revolved around the availability of formal policies with respect to using a particular language as the medium of instruction in kindergartens in Tabriz. The main following question was about the informal internal policies of those kindergartens regarding the language of instruction if there were no formal policy about the issue of the medium of instruction. The questions were posed in semi-structured interviews which allowed enough flexibility to pose other follow-up questions to probe into the issue to a greater extent while a previously selected set of questions served as "the discursive compass that steered the interviews back on track" whenever there appeared to be a significant digression (Gao & Park, 2012, p. 543) (for more details on methodology, see 3.4.1)

*Excerpt 1*

***[IQ]<sup>7</sup> Is there a rule or regulation to tell you what language to use in classes as the medium of instruction?***

***[KAA]<sup>89</sup> No, but preferably, they tell us to use Farsi because the official language is Farsi. We have some children who unfortunately do not know Farsi at all, or of course we cannot blame them. That's why we have a difficult task in this bilingual area. So it is not practical to use only Farsi at first.***

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<sup>7</sup> Interview question

<sup>8</sup> Kindergarten authority's answer

<sup>9</sup> The interviews were conducted in Azeri, and then translated into English.

***[IQ] So it is in the hand of the management as to what language to use?***

*[KAA] Yes, but we try to see what the need is. If we focus on Farsi-only programs at first, children will lose interest. On the other hand, if we have Azeri-only classes they'll have trouble understanding the material at schools. You know, children come here with a background in Farsi, they have learned a lot from TV, games and even home; some parents speak Farsi with them. Fortunately, you can hardly find a child who doesn't know Farsi at all. It is easy to work with such students. They learn fast. They fully understand Farsi in 2 or 3 months.*

The above excerpt which was repeated almost identically by the nine other kindergarten authorities reveals very useful points about language policies in the education system. Clearly as stated above, there is no written and formal policy as to what language should be used in pre-schools as the medium of instruction. However, the informal policy seems to be using Farsi as the medium of instruction, as is made clear in the first line, i.e. *they tell us to use Farsi because the official language is Farsi*, 'they' referring to a policy-making committee.<sup>10</sup> This statement is repeated in a different form in another kindergarten's manager's responses. He believes that there are rules and regulations which stress that Farsi should be used in classes as the medium of instruction although those rules are not written.

*Excerpt 2*

***[IQ] Is there a rule or regulation to tell you what language to use in classes as the medium of instruction?***

*[KAA] Yes there are rules and regulations although you cannot find them on paper easily. The emphasis is on Farsi, though.*

In line with the above head teacher's answers, another pre-school head teacher clearly referred to the absence of clear, formal written policies.

*Excerpt 3*

*[KAA] There are no explicit rules regarding the language. We ask parents to speak Azeri at home until when the child is three years old. The problem is that sometimes some children do not know Farsi at all and sometimes some children do not know Azeri at all. The private kindergartens are under the authority of an organization called Welfare Organization. The policies are not really clear and when a supervisor visits the kindergarten, he/she pays much attention to simple things like colors of*

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<sup>10</sup> Using follow-up questions, it was clarified that a policy-making committee consisted of some of the experienced preschool and kindergarten authorities existed who was responsible for making policies with respect to educational issues. The committee worked under the supervision of the Welfare Organization.

*classes rather than quality of education. So what we do is we try to integrate both languages in the first month and then we little by little switch to Farsi-only classes.*

The absence of clear rules and paying little or no attention to educational issues has left the fate of languages to market forces. As Fishman (2006) argues, any "no-policy policy" situation, works in favor of the dominant language. The lack of supportive and promotive policies with respect to Azeri seems to have left no choice for the authorities but to creatively modify the unwritten policies favoring Farsi. Because Azeri children will attend the primary school in the following years where the textbooks are in Farsi, kindergartens consider it their first priority to provide the linguistic capacity and skills required to understand those textbooks. As the kindergarten head teacher notes, because children come from different linguistic backgrounds, the teachers have a difficult job. They, therefore, use both Azeri and Farsi in the beginning month(s) of the year, and then switch to a Farsi-only policy making the education sector serve as a unifying and nation-building tool. This is indeed what school as an institution normally does; that is, working towards "uniformity and monolingualism in the approved variety associated with literacy" (Spolsky, 2009, p. 91). This strategy is also used to gain and/or secure the Azeri-speaking children's trust as one of the head teachers notes:

*Excerpt 4*

*[KAA] Psychologically speaking, we need to speak Azeri with the child so he or she could trust us, especially emotionally, except those whose mother tongue is Farsi. The children can speak Farsi well when they finish kindergarten.*

My classroom observations as well as observations I had during the interviews confirm the teachers and managers' responses. Because I was collecting data near middle of the academic year, as the authorities reported above, they had already switched to Farsi-only policies both in classes and outside the classes in kindergartens. As I entered a class, the teacher asked the students in Farsi to greet me. All the instructions were in Farsi and the children could perform all of them. They could also answer their teacher's questions in Farsi almost flawlessly. The Farsi-only policy was also observed outside the classes. While I was interviewing the manager, a child came in the office and talked about a little problem he had. All the conversation was carried out in Farsi. As one of the authorities noted above, Azeri children can speak Farsi quite well by the end of kindergarten.

Of great interest are the attitudes and perceptions of the head teacher in Excerpt 3. She views not knowing Farsi or Azeri at all by the age of five or six as a problem. The line

*'The problem is that sometimes some children do not know Farsi at all and sometimes some children do not know Azeri at all'* implies that the authorities expect and promulgate the view that children should be able to know both Azeri and Farsi by the age they start kindergarten. This can be called 'bilingualism in favor of the dominant language,' as it implies that L2 should be introduced in the domain of home. This condition is highly likely to eventually result in language shift from L1 to L2 considering the higher prestige, and instrumental value of L2 (Baker, 1992, 2006; Errihani, 2008; Oliver, Collard, Rochecouste, & Purdie, 2002; Spolsky, 2009). Excerpt 3 also indicates that speaking Azeri up to the age of three and Farsi afterwards with children in the home appears to be the norm expected and advertised in these institutes attempting to reduce or remove the school-home linguistic discontinuity (Edwards & Giles, 1984) which exists in Tabriz. Such attitudes have been attributed to the absence of L1 in the education system. As Spolsky (2009, p. 90) argues, using only the official language with children, and denying, ignoring and punishing the home language of children in schools may persuade the child of his/her "deficiencies" and his/her parents "disadvantaged status" (see also Tacelosky, 2001). These negative attitudes towards the home language are highly likely to make an impact on language choice in favor of the dominant language leading to language shift, loss, or death. Positive/negative attitudes are considered to be playing a significant role in language maintenance/shift (Baker, 1992, 2006; Errihani, 2008; Oliver, et al., 2002), especially when they are shaped at the early stages of lifespan making them relatively unlikely to change (Garrett, et al., 2003, p. 5).

Positive attitudes towards Farsi and negative attitudes towards Azeri can be inferred from the managers' responses. Expression of regret by using the word *'unfortunately'* (Excerpt 1) for those children who do not know Farsi by the age of 5-6, when they attend kindergartens, clearly shows that the kindergarten authorities expect Azeri children to know some Farsi by that age. The positive attitudes towards knowing Farsi by children are demonstrated in the last lines.

#### *Excerpt 5*

[KAA] *Fortunately, you can hardly find a child who doesn't know Farsi at all. It is easy to work with such students. They learn fast. They fully understand Farsi in 2 or 3 months.'*

Positive attitudes towards and pride and joy in the ability of very young Azeri children to speak Farsi was found in the comment of another kindergarten's authority who was also

the head of a committee responsible to decide on the teaching material for each year. Using adverbs such as '*beautifully*' and '*perfectly*' for those children who speak Farsi at the age of four demonstrates her favorable attitudes towards very young Farsi-speaking children.

*Excerpt 6*

[KAA] *If we speak Azeri with children under 3 and then teach them Farsi, they learn Farsi beautifully. I've seen children who can speak Farsi perfectly by the age of four.*

One possible explanation for the managers' positive attitudes towards Farsi seems to be the higher instrumental value of Farsi compared to Azeri as reflected in the following excerpt:

*Excerpt 7*

[KAA] *We use Farsi because we are thinking of children's future. The children should be able to speak Farsi so that they can succeed in their future life.*

Farsi as the official language of the country, the language of administration and education, is regarded a language of a higher value which facilitates upward social and economic, and educational mobility. As a consequence, not only the managers but parents also insist that the medium of instruction should be Farsi in the kindergartens:

*Excerpt 8*

[KAA] *Usually, the parents ask us to use Farsi in the kindergartens because they see that their children have trouble at schools, specially understanding the meanings of the words, as it is with my own child.*

Stigma attached to speaking Azeri, and even speaking Farsi with an Azeri "accent," also seems to be playing a role in shaping positive attitudes towards Farsi and the promulgation of starting speaking Farsi in the home as soon as when children are three years old. One of the teachers working in the kindergarten refers to this issue: *Once I myself was mocked because my Azeri accent.* Another teacher takes this issue even further and talks about her experience a few years ago when she was rejected for her prized job, teaching the first grade, because of her speaking Farsi with Azeri accent.

*Excerpt 9*

[T]<sup>11</sup> *I was living outside Tabriz a few years ago, and wanted to teach at a school. They didn't give me the first year class because of my Azeri accent. So that's why I stress the importance of speaking Farsi without accent in classes.*

No digression from the standard official language even in the form of an accent seems to be the de facto policy within the kindergartens. The inferiority of a minority accent in the eyes of dominant groups and its impact on successful job application has been indeed documented (Shuy & Fasold, 1973). Speaking "accent-free" Farsi (see Shohamy, 2006, for myth as an LPP mechanism) is regarded so important that one of the authorities brought up the issue in her answer to the question about the policies in her workplace:

*Excerpt 10*

[KAA] *We try to speak accent-free Farsi so that students can speak Farsi without accent in the future.*

The low esteem and stigma attached to Azeri seems to be evident in classes as well. A teacher reported that some children who come from Azeri-only backgrounds and whose parents teach them Azeri words, say for father and mother, rather than the Farsi equivalents, are mocked by other students when they use those Azeri words in class.

*Excerpt 11*

[T] *Those children, under the influence of us here, change their words to Farsi ones. Those children find themselves alone to use those Azeri words. They are mocked by other children so they quit using them.*

The teacher's comment clearly demonstrates that language shift from Azeri to Farsi takes place in these educational institutes. The messages delivered to children and their parents in and through these institutes are about Azeri's low prestige and low instrumental value.

The higher instrumental value of Farsi and its tangible economic and social benefits, on the one hand, and the stigma attached to Azeri, on the other, seems to have made the educational institutions and parents support lowering the age for the introduction of Farsi. This necessarily means that Farsi should be taught to young children in the home which is highly likely to result in subtractive bilingualism and language shift from Azeri to Farsi (see Ting, 2003). The gradual lowering of the student age for the introduction of L2 (here Farsi) may suggest parents and authorities' tendency to view L2 as equal to L1 which

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<sup>11</sup> Teacher

might have implication for future actions on the part of parents to speak Farsi at home and stop passing on Azeri to the next generation. Parents' attitudes towards Azeri and Farsi will be investigated in detail in chapter seven.

In sum, 'no digression from the standard Farsi' seems to be the first priority in pre-schools in Tabriz, be it in the form of speaking a minority language or speaking it with an "accent." Although there might be no rules available on paper, the authorities know that they should prepare Azeri-speaking children for the future school years in which both the teaching material and the medium of instruction is Farsi.

Exploring local policy implementers' discourse has demonstrated they hold positive attitudes towards Farsi whereas they are uncommitted, if not negative, to supporting Azeri. Such attitudes mainly seem to have originated from the lack of explicit supportive policies for Azeri within the education system which has resulted in its lower status and instrumental value in relation to Farsi. In this instance, this relates to how the lower public esteem and instrumental value of Azeri in relation to Farsi leads many teachers and principals to value the acquisition of Farsi over Azeri even before primary schools. In other words, the absence of explicit and deliberate supportive policies for Azeri in the education system has resulted in conversion of ideology as default policy among Azeri teachers and principals (see also Fishman, 2006). As Shannon (1999) argues, with no policies to guide schools and teachers differently, their practice will be based on the prevalent ideology in the society, which according to Fishman (2006), always serves the dominant language and its speakers.

Language management in Iran does not consider the linguistic background of minority children, and provides no protective and supportive policies (in this case for Azeris) obliging different institutions to promote minority languages. Pre-schools and kindergartens in Tabriz can be said to function based on their own ideologies. Those ideologies, as seen above, ultimately favor Farsi, resulting in authorities and teachers' suggestions that parents should speak the dominant language in the home (see excerpt three above). In other words, lack of Farsi knowledge even before kindergarten is viewed as a problem. The following section discusses how such ideologies and values are Discursively constructed through the education system.

### **4.3 The education system, a vehicle for Discourse planning: Policy as performance**

Discourse planning, as defined in chapter two, refers to modifying or reinforcing a particular world-view, attitudes and/or ideologies conducted through state-run domains and institutions which function as a role model for people to follow (c.f. Lo Bianco, 2010a). It is through these domains and institutions that certain messages with respect to languages and their speakers present in societies are delivered which "shape and fix meanings and social realities" (Mumby & Mease, 2011, p. 285). It is argued that these Discourses "order and naturalize the world in particular ways" (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004, p. 9).

The education system, language-in-education planning (acquisition planning) (Cooper, 1989), has historically been a decisive institution playing a role in Discursive construction of what should be seen as a "problem" requiring a particular treatment (Lo Bianco, 2005, p. 256), as well as establishing and/or maintaining social power among elites, nation-building, and the fate of languages. This is usually carried out through curriculum, textbooks, tests, and teachers which influence the minds of students, however, realized so subtly that makes it very difficult to distinguish it from "the indoctrination of ideologies of powerful groups or organizations in society" (van Dijk, 2008, p. 12).

Kindergartens and preschools in Tabriz, as "the microcosm of wider social interaction" (Edwards & Giles, 1984, p. 119), can be said to reflect the values and priorities of the dominant group (re)producing the status and power difference between groups (Cummins, 1988, p. 130), making them the sites where Azeri children first encounter "social policy of the broadest kind (cultural pluralism or assimilation for example)" (Edwards & Giles, 1984, p. 120). Preschools and kindergartens can be consequently viewed as planned ideological institutions where particular attitudes and views about languages (Azeri, Farsi) and groups are molded through messages implicitly advertised by authorities. The absence of Azeri from such a domain may arguably help to "perpetuate linguistic decline" (Brown, 2012, p. 282). Such Discursive practices of the education system (van Dijk, 2008) consequently play a significant part in language maintenance/shift (Jones, 2012).

The absence of Azeri and lack of supportive policies for Azeri in the education system on the one hand, and using Farsi as the only medium of instruction on the other, communicates explicit and implicit messages to the public about the desired values and



priorities within the education system. As a result, Azeri kindergarten students' inability to speak Farsi before primary school, and in most cases kindergarten, in Tabriz is Discursively constructed, and consequently viewed, as a 'problem' which requires preschools and Azeri parents' involvement in speaking Farsi with the children in kindergartens as well as in the home. Such Discourse(s) created within the education system therefore constructs and defines "an ideal parent" as the one who speaks Farsi with the child in the home. As Nakagawa (2000) argues, educational policies can Discursively construct certain ways of viewing "ideal parents" and how they should interact with schools, which is usually directed to minorities and lower income families. And, if such parents do not behave the way they should according to the school, their children may receive less attention from the education system (p. 447).

The education system in Iran can be arguably claimed to be playing a major role in creating "external push factors" which "direct internal pull factors" (see May, 2008a) among Azeris to conform to the mainstream ideology favoring Farsi. Because the Discursive practices of the education system are closely intertwined with immediate tangible benefits it offers, receiving education in Farsi is associated with upward social mobility. Such tangible economic benefits provided by education in the official language makes it in turn a more valuable and prestigious language. The Discursive construction of the dominant language as the ideal language for economic growth and success may bring about a lower status and value of other languages absent from the education system (Azeri, in this case).

The analysis of kindergarten principals' views about policies confirms Spolsky's assertion about policies being covert and unwritten most of the time. Spolsky (2004) writes that language policies, both at national and institutional level, are not formal and written most of the time, so that the nature of such policies should be derived from the "practices and beliefs." Even when there is a written and formal policy, its effect is neither "guaranteed nor consistent" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 8). Covert institutional discriminations of this type, i.e. "linguicism" (Phillipson, 1988, pp. 341-342), are used to "legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are defined on the basis of language (on the basis of their mother tongue)" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 13). The choice of Farsi as the medium of instruction or the language of initial literacy for all in a multilingual nation-state like Iran necessarily advantages the speakers of that language over the speakers of other languages (see Mangubhai, 2002, p. 492). It is through this process that the dominant

group/language presents "an idealized image of itself, stigmatizing the dominated group language, and rationalizing the relationship between the two, always to the advantage of the dominant group/language" (Phillipson, 1988, p. 341).

The education sector in Iran also makes what Lo Bianco (2008b, p. 122) calls "systematic and repeatable socialization" possible. That is, schools, when used as a nationing tool, are capable of unifying people via formal education over generations so that "the will of the young" is bent to "the will of the nation" (see May, 2008a, p. 171). Given that such policies have historically resulted in the repression and endangerment of regional languages (Oakes, 2011), viewing educational policies, from script choice (Sebba, 2006) to testing (McNamara, 2008; Menken, 2008; Shohamy, 2006, 2008), solely as educational/linguistic issues are, therefore, considered "simplistic." Educational policies have been usually surrounded by "political debates about national identity, dominance, and control by elites in power, power relationships among politicians and civil servants, questions about social order, and the perceived potential subversiveness of language minorities" (Baker, 2002, p. 237). Education systems are viewed as "ideological state apparatuses" (Althusser, 1969) which represents "a deliberate and planned environment" where powerful messages about "prestigious social norms regarding language usage" (Escandell, 2011, p. 326) are delivered to students from local and national authorities (Brown, 2012, p. 282), molding particular attitudes and mentalities (Gao & Park, 2012; Lopez, 2008, p. 50). Such Discursive practices of the education system (van Dijk, 2008) may in turn play a significant part in language maintenance/shift (Jones, 2012).

The analysis of policy as text, discourse, and performance (Discourse planning) presented above suggests that minority languages in Iran have been constitutionally legitimated in addition to Farsi. However, they have not been institutionalized, i.e. they have not been through a process by which they come "to be accepted or taken for granted in wide range of social, cultural, and linguistic domains or contexts, both formal and informal" (May, 2008a, p. 6). An inevitable corollary of such policies has been the acceptance of Farsi as a key to educational and financial success lowering the status, symbolic and instrumental value of Azeri. In other words, the lack of supportive policies for the institutionalization of Azeri on the one hand, and the intertwined Discursive and pragmatic functions of the education sectors favoring Farsi, on the other, go hand in hand to promote Farsi as the ideal language for socioeconomic and educational development. It is in such circumstances that the prevalent ideologies are converted, and consequently function, as default policies. Such attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies promulgated directly or

indirectly in the education sector may function as input, i.e. "a predisposing factor," resulting in particular output (see Baker, 1992, p. 12; Garrett, et al., 2003, p. 67). As the data above illustrated, the particular output in the case of Azeri has been uncommitted, if not negatively-oriented, kindergarten and preschool principals and teachers. Such uncommitted behavior on the part of the education sector with respect to Azeri education can ultimately play a decisive role in Azeri maintenance.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has shown how macro language policies are interpreted, mediated and enacted in Tabriz with respect to Azeri. Though legally possible, Azeri is taught in schools neither as a subject nor as a medium of instruction resulting in its lower status and value in the eyes of Azeris. Both kindergarten authorities as the policy implementers and parents and children as the policy recipients consider learning Farsi a necessity since Farsi can provide tangible pragmatic benefits for them. The "sink or swim" (May, 2008a) style of education explicitly and implicitly promotes and promulgates the ever-increasing value and status of Farsi resulting in an inclination in Azeris' attitudes in favor of Farsi and against Azeri. It has been argued here that such policies may work in tandem to bring about subtractive bilingualism and finally language shift.

Minority people, if they want to cohabitate with a majority group in a society, have little choice but to learn a language of wider communication besides their own language so that they can access their heritage culture and tradition as well as participate in the social, economic, and political life of their country (e.g. see Tacelosky, 2001, p. 52). As a result, bilingualism becomes a necessity for them, not something they themselves have chosen (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 10). It is in such settings that the education system becomes a very strong LPP mechanism to impose language policies and turn ideologies into practices through formal education (Shohamy, 2006, 2008). Labelling schooling as "colonialistic," Hopson (2011) similarly avers that "schools and colonialism are inextricably linked", and "schools do not exist without some larger agenda of colonialism and colonization" (p. 212). That is, schools are used as an instrument to maintain hegemony of the ruling class which is usually done by channeling "youth into status and occupational roles that support the existing power structure" (Hopson, 2011, p. 212). In other words, education systems as "the property of states," carry "the imprimatur and conditioning of political systems" (Lo Bianco, 2008b, p. 113).

Despite the fact that education systems can be used for grass roots language activism to "negotiate, demand, and introduce alternative language policies" (Shohamy, 2006, p. 76), educational policies are not resisted and contested in Tabriz. Bestowing different statuses and values upon, and providing tangible benefits through certain languages (Farsi in this case), the education system plays a decisive role in the fate of languages. As May (2008a, p. 153) writes, "the spread of standardized education, the associated literacy demands of the labour force, and the inevitable and wide spread of interaction required in dealing with state agencies" marginalizes other languages which are not widely used in the public realm to the extent that they become "inconsequential." In other words, the education system plays a major role in shaping a certain type of ecology for languages through its Discursive and pragmatic functions which is highly likely to result in language maintenance within dominant communities, and language shift among other smaller' groups.

To showcase the impact of the education system on a written domain and examine language policies in another major domain, the next chapter examines the language policies in the domain of the public sphere (linguistic landscape) in Tabriz. The analysis of public versus private signs demonstrates, firstly, to what extent Azeri is supported by policies in that domain, and secondly, the Azeri people's language choice for writing in public signage. It also provides evidence of the degree to which Azeris' literacy has been influenced by the educational policies discussed in this chapter.

## **Chapter Five: Linguistic landscapes: Discourses in Public**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter examined the dynamics of implementation of educational policies in light of language rules and regulations stated in the constitution. I argued that the education system in Tabriz serves Farsi by (re)producing Discourses with respect to higher prestige and value of Farsi compared to Azeri. Because there are no proactive policies to support and promote Azeri within the education system, the public ideology that 'Farsi is necessary for upward socioeconomic mobility' functions as the default policy within kindergartens and preschools.

This chapter explores language policies and language use in public signage (known as linguistic landscapes) as another domain surrounding the domain of home. It is argued that linguistic landscapes (LL) have the power to affect the perceptions of groups, and these perceptions constitute a potentially important contributing factor to language maintenance/shift in multilingual settings (cf. Atkinson & Kelly-Holmes, 2006; Reershemius, 2011). In this sense, LL can function as a Discourse planning device influencing people's perceptions of the status of different languages, and even affecting their linguistic behavior. The linguistic landscape, therefore, may influence language use (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006, p. 67; Sayer, 2010).

The chapter begins with a definition and discussion of linguistic landscapes in the literature. An analysis of the official governmental signage, i.e. top-down LL, is then presented to explore language policies of the state within this domain. Supplementing an analysis of language use on Azeris' private signs with survey data on literacy in Tabriz, the interplay between educational policies discussed in the previous chapter and language use in the LL is discussed. Linguistic landscapes, as "a space for language battles" (Shohamy, 2006, p. 123), are studied here to shed light on mainly three areas: (a) official and private language ideologies (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010); (b) the interplay between educational policies and language use in the linguistic landscape (Shiohata, 2012); and (c) the impact of official language policies on individuals at the grass roots level (Cenoz & Gorter, 2009). Comparing and contrasting language use in the official governmental signs and private individual signage can illuminate "how authorities wish to portray a local linguistic situation," and whether, if at all, that particular portrayal is accepted by the general population (Puzey, 2012, p. 141).

## 5.1 Linguistic landscapes

Research on the linguistic landscape (LL) has constantly grown within the field of language policy and planning since Landry and Bourhis' (1997) systematic investigation of linguistic landscapes in Canada. The linguistic landscape is defined as "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25) as well as graffiti, posters, stickers, etc (Kallen, 2010). Language use in public signage, though very chaotic on the surface, is assumed not to be arbitrary and random, but rather systematic. It is believed that the examination of language use in public can reveal various types of information about the LL in general, the messages it could deliver, economy, policy and multilingualism in a particular context (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). Because the LL offers a space to defy declared policies (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009), it can reflect the formal and explicit language policies on the one hand, and the de facto practices at the grass roots level on the other. Further, the investigation of the questions of "linguistic landscape by whom?" and "linguistic landscape for whom?" may provide a cogent answer to the question of "linguistic landscape quo vadis?" (Backhaus, 2007, p. 2), pointing to the direction the linguistic landscape in a given area is heading and, very likely, to the fate of languages and groups in that area.

Because the presence of minority and endangered languages in the linguistic landscape can contribute to their visibility and vitality (Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012), often by impacting the perceptions and attitudes of people (Crystal, 2000; Dailey, Giles, & Jansma, 2005; Landry & Bourhis, 1997), the investigation of the dynamics of language ideologies in the linguistic landscape can serve as "a canvas where the dominant and marginalized discourses on languages are depicted" (Reershemius, 2011, p. 38). Examining the linguistic landscape, thus, "offers a rich domain of 'real life', authentic language in very dynamic and energetic uses" (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009, p. 3).

## 5.2 Language use in the linguistic landscape

Language use in the linguistic landscape is believed to be governed by three main rules, namely "write signs in a language you know," "prefer to write signs in the language or languages that intended readers are assumed to read," and "the symbolic value condition" (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991). Because the linguistic landscape is essentially a written domain, the first rule can be considered necessary as without the language knowledge one could not set up a sign in that language, unless the sign owner asks the sign

writer or originator to use that language in the sign. Likewise, the second rule, also known as "presumed reader" is applied when some information is supposed to be communicated to a presumed reader. The major function of this kind of signs can be said to be informational (c.f. Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Accordingly, literacy in a language(s) is a prerequisite condition to create signs. Therefore, the interplay between educational policies providing literacy in a language(s) and language choice/use in the LL cannot be neglected. Shiohata (2012), for instance, shows how the introduction of Wolof into the curriculum has promoted its use in the linguistic landscape in Dakar, Senegal. The linguistic proficiency of the sign writer and the potential sign reader are, thus, considered two influential factors which clearly impact language use in the LL.

Although literacy in a language, both on the part of sign writers and sign readers, is a prerequisite condition to create signs, language use in the LL is not always governed by writing and reading abilities of individuals. Rather, language is often used symbolically for "political and sociocultural" purposes (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991, p. 84). The symbolic value condition states that "prefer to write signs in your own language or in a language with which you wish to be identified." This rule is often used to explain why dominant languages such as English, French, or Italian are present in non-English, French, or Italian speaking communities. Piller (2001, 2003), for example, argues that using such languages makes the reader activate values such as success, international orientation, modernity, etc. by just recognizing that the message is in English although they cannot understand the message. In these signs, because English is not directly related to the product or service, it use functions as a secondary discourse suggesting the interrelation between the international markets and knowledge of English (Piller, 2001, p. 157). In such circumstances, English functions as an index of social stereotypes of modernity, progress, prestige, superior quality or commercial value, and globalization (Kasanga, 2012; Piller, 2003) rather than a "spatial presence" of an "ethnolinguistic community" (Androutsopoulos, 2014, p. 83). On these signs, the linguistic medium rather than the content of signs convey particular meanings (Sayer, 2010). That is, languages such as English with "connotational value" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006, p. 70) are used to "symbolize foreign taste and manners" rather than index a community speaking those languages (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 118). In other words, in cases where the symbolic value condition applies, "proclaiming ownership is more important than being understood" (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991, p. 85). The political, economic, and social value of a language can, thus, rule out the first and second rules in these signs.

Language is used for informational or symbolic purposes in public signage by both official governmental agencies and individuals. These domains of LL are respectively known as top-down and bottom-up signage (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, & Trumper, 2006). The top-down and bottom-up domains of linguistic landscapes and de facto language policies with respect to each domain are discussed below.

### **5.3 Top-down and bottom-up linguistic landscapes**

Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, and Trumper's (2006) define top-down linguistic landscapes as those official signs put up by the government or related institutions, such as signs put up by banks, hospitals, insurance companies, and governmental offices, street names and traffic signs. Language use on top-down signage is likely to be constrained and regulated by language policy and planning directives (Kelly-Holmes & Atkinson, 2007, p. 39) although there is no guarantee that all the official signs meet these policies and directives (Puzey, 2012). By contrast, bottom-up linguistic signs are those placed by individuals and private institutions and organizations, commercial enterprises, etc. (Gorter, 2006, p. 3).

The main difference between top-down and bottom-up signage lies in the fact that top-down signs are expected to "reflect a general commitment to the dominant culture" and "overt language policies of a given state" while bottom-up signs are "designed much more freely according to individual strategies," manifesting the "covert language policies of a community, the grass roots cultural identity and aspirations of its members" (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006, pp. 10, 32). Put differently, language choice or "code preference" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) in official top-down signage may be determined by power relations, whereas nonofficial bottom-up signage may make use of languages for different purposes such as solidarity (Backhaus, 2006, pp. 62-63). It is the investigation of the discrepancy (or lack thereof) between language use pattern in top-down signs and that of bottom-up signage that provides useful information about ideologies, policies, and aspirations of policy-makers and communities as well as the vitality and power relations between groups and their languages, especially in bi/multilingual contexts (Landry & Bourhis, 1997).

Below, de facto language policies on the top-down and bottom-up domains of linguistic landscapes in Tabriz are explored. In other words, the city of Tabriz is socio-linguistically characterized by identifying the languages its inhabitants know and the languages they claim to use (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991) as well as the reasons behind the



current linguistic landscape, throwing light on the ethnolinguistic situation in Tabriz (see Calvet, 2006, p. 41).

## 5.4 Top-down signs in Tabriz: An indicator of ideologies and a Discourse planning mechanism

Linguistic landscapes data were collected on three main streets in the downtown area in Tabriz. These streets were chosen for data collection for two main reasons. Firstly, these streets represented a fair picture of the LL of Tabriz. This decision was reached after mapping out different areas of the city. Secondly, there were several schools located on these streets and neighboring areas, providing potential young recipients of Discourses promulgated on the LL, which can have an impact on the new generation's attitudes and perception (for methodological details, see chapter three).

Of the total number of 455 signs, defined here as "written text within a spatially definable frame" (Backhaus, 2006, p. 55), 163 signs were identified as top-down. These signs, as noted above, included signs put up by banks, hospitals, insurance companies, and governmental offices, street names and traffic signs. Based on language(s) used on the signs, top-down signage was categorized into five types of signs: a) Farsi only signs, b) Farsi signs with their English translation below them, c) signs with Farsi and Azeri on them, d) Azeri only signs, and e) signs with Azeri and English on them.

Language of sign	Number of signs (percentage)
Farsi only	88/163 (54%)
Farsi & English	72 (44%)
Azeri & Farsi	1(0.61%)
Azeri only	1(0.61%)
Azeri & English	1(0.61%)

Table 5.1: The number of signs in different languages in top-down signage in Tabriz

As table 5.1 demonstrates, Farsi only signs, and secondly the Farsi and English bilingual signs, dominated top-down signage in the city of Tabriz, while Azeri signs are minimally represented in the linguistic landscape of the city. The dominance of Farsi, presence of English, and absence of Azeri in the top-down signage in Tabriz are respectively discussed.

The dominance of Farsi in the official governmental signs, both in frequency of occurrence and the prominence of display - i.e. "numerical superiority" rather than other features of signs such as font size, color, texture, position of text, etc. (Kasanga, 2012, p. 553), is not surprising, because, as discussed in the previous chapter, Article 15 of the Iranian Constitution clearly states that all official writing should be in Farsi. As a result, all the official signage in Tabriz is in Farsi indicating its institutional and political power over English, and Azeri, except for a few signs which seem to be an exception to the rule.

The presence and dominance of Farsi in the top-down linguistic landscape of Tabriz is highly likely to indicate explicit and implicit language policies and ideologies. As Coupland (2010, p. 96) writes, ideologies related to language policy and planning leave their imprint on the visible environment, allowing the examination of public signage as "the outward evidence of language policy" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 1). "Public sector signage" is therefore viewed as an "institutional articulation of an explicit and prescribed set of legislative and language planning principles." The dominance of Farsi, as the official language of the state, in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz suggests LL is used as a device to index Tabriz as a community where Farsi is spoken. Given the strong links between LL and linguistic identity (Puzey, 2012, p. 141), Farsi in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz seems to be used to connote national unity and national identity. Because the choices of languages in LL may be also motivated by "stereotypes of readers, of what policy-makers think of them as they construct people as *lingua persona*" (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009, p. 3), the analysis of top-down linguistic landscape can indicate what kind of community is favored and/or aspired to by policy makers. In other words, "LL underscores the ideology's orientation to future action" (Sloboda, 2009, p. 175). The dominance of Farsi on top-down signage could be, therefore, construed as the policy makers' desire for a community where Farsi is the dominant language which is widely used.

The presence of English in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz, however, cannot be construed as an indication of policy-makers' desire to establish a community where English is spoken as it is in stark contradiction with national integrity. Nor can it be an index of its use as a language of wider communication. The presence of English in the top-down domain of the LL can be said to be of symbolic and informational functions (c.f. Landry & Bourhis, 1997). As noted above, English holds the status of the international language which connotes modernity, international orientation, globalization, and success. Symbolically, the presence of English in the official and governmental signage helps the state present the country as a modern, successful, and internationally-oriented nation-state.

The use of English in the top-down signage can be also construed as informational. That is, English is used to communicate messages to potential tourists from other countries. As Figure 5.1 shows, English is used to provide the sign reader with directions to get to the airport or Azerbaijan Square. Language use in top-down signage seems to be more informational, asking people to do something, giving directions, etc.



Figure 5.1: Farsi-English bilingual sign

Given the status and the functions of Farsi and English, their presence in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz seems logical. Farsi provides access to information for Azeris and other Iranians visiting the city, and English plays the same role for potential international visitors. However, what is of paramount importance is the absence of Azeri, as a minority language, from the governmental and official signage which can be discussed from two perspectives, namely how the absence of minority languages from LL reflect the relative power and status of different languages in a sociolinguistic context, and how linguistic landscape contributes to the Discursive construction of the sociolinguistic context (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006).

The presence and dominance of Farsi over Azeri in the LL of Tabriz mirrors the power relations between the two languages on the one hand, and the lack of supportive policies to make the use of Azeri in the public space possible, on the other. Farsi, as seen

in chapter four, has been institutionalized as a norm for writing and reading through the education system. Besides the institutional power, Farsi, as the official language, also enjoys more political power, and higher status and prestige. The absence of Azeri signs consequently suggests its lower status and weaker position in comparison to Farsi.

The presence or absence of minority languages in the public space is believed to influence the status and vitality of languages in a given area (Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012) by impacting the perceptions and attitudes of people (Dailey, et al., 2005; Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Crystal (2000), for example, notes that an endangered community's prestige can be increased through its visibility which can be achieved through the use of the language in public signage, implying the acceptability of the language's presence in the wider community (Crystal, 2000, p. 131). Puzey (2012) also considers the promotion of minority languages in the LL to be "a fundamental step towards greater recognition," which often "inspires debates and frequently becomes topos of language activism and campaigning" serving as "a catalyst for challenging negative stereotypes or old prejudices and for other developments of direct benefit to the language" (p. 143). The presence of minority languages in the linguistic landscape can ultimately help to "redress the balance between majority and minority languages" (Puzey, 2012, p. 144). In this sense, linguistic landscapes can serve as "a visible institutional support" (Dailey, et al., 2005, p. 28) for minority languages.

The lower status of Azeri is also reflected in the signs on which Azeri appears. One Azeri-Farsi bilingual sign found in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz was a small (perhaps 5cm by 3cm) sign located on some trees along one of the streets where I was collecting data (see Figure 5.2). The sign was placed by the Regional Municipality One, Department of Parks and Greensward (my own translation). The sentence on the top in the white font is in Azeri, saying '*Trees grow in (come from) Heaven*' implying trees are a divine blessing, while all the other words below that are in Farsi. Given that the relative size of signs can point to the relative power of languages (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), such signs where Azeri, if at all, appears can connote a small, weak, and minoritized community. Although signs like Figure 5.2 index a community where people can understand both Azeri and Farsi, they simultaneously symbolize a more powerful community who can speak Farsi and a weaker community who can speak Azeri. Taking the social and physical world that surrounds signs, i.e. Tabriz as a diglossic city, into account, it can be argued that the dominance of Farsi and the absence of Azeri together creates "Discourse(s) in place" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) signaling the relatively weaker

position and status of Azeri. It has been argued that such Discourse(s) can function as a contributing factor in the construction of particular ecology for languages affecting the speakers' attitudes and perceptions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). It is, therefore, suggested here that the top-down domain of linguistic landscape which is governed by the state be considered as a device for Discourse planning (see chapter two).



Figure 5.2: Azeri/Farsi bilingual sign (Type C)

The absence of Azeri from the top-down LL in Tabriz, as the data demonstrates, suggests the linguistic landscape work against Azeri's status and prestige which may arguably influence Azeri's vitality in Tabriz. Linguistic landscapes, as Landry and Bourhis (1997) contend, have the power to affect the perceptions of groups, and these perceptions constitute a potentially important contributing factor to language maintenance/shift in multilingual settings (cf. Atkinson & Kelly-Holmes, 2006; Reershemius, 2011). In this sense, LL can influence people's perceptions of the status of different languages, and even affect their linguistic behavior (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006, p. 67; Sayer, 2010). The linguistic landscape, therefore, might have an influence on language use (cf. Hornsby, 2008). In sum, the absence of Azeri from the governmental official signage implies that LL, as Shohamy (2006) maintains, serves as one of the LPP devices at the disposal of the state.



One more contributing factor to the strength of this LPP device, i.e. linguistic landscape, is the situation of "no-policy policy" (Fishman, 2006), i.e. a situation where there are no authoritative supportive policies for minority groups on the one hand, and the dominant group distributes "rewards in accord with its interests, values and goals," on the other, creating a situation working against the minority languages. This terminology is extended to the field of linguistic landscape in this study. The no-policy policy situation with respect to LL in Tabriz can be observed not only with regard to presence or absence of languages on the signs (e.g. the absence of Azeri), but also regarding the type, color, and size of the signs (e.g. using different types, and colors for the same sign pointing to the same street).

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 are interesting exemplars of a "no-policy policy" situation in Tabriz which provide useful insights on what inferences can be made based on language choice in the public sphere. Figure 5.3, an Azeri only sign, was a street (bridge) name which was written in Azeri. The presence of Azeri only signs in a diglossic city like Tabriz where a language different from the official language of the country is spoken can be taken as a challenge to national identity. The denial of Farsi in such signs placed by governmental institutions could suggest the denial of Iranian identity. On the other hand, the absence of Farsi on these signs makes it difficult, if not impossible, for travelers from other cities to read those signs.



Figure 5.3: Azeri only sign (Type D)

Figure 5.4 also implies a no-policy policy situation. This Azeri-English bilingual street name is an example of "duplicating multilingual writing" where exactly the same text is provided in two different language (Reh, 2004, p. 8). Acknowledging the societal multilingualism in a given area, this practice may be a reaction to technical and/or

affective aspects of communication. As Reh (2004, p. 8) argues, duplicating multilingual writing is practiced in situations where all members of the target community cannot be reached using one language, where the sender intends to address a particular group (e.g. trade, tourism), and for educational purposes. These assumptions, however, do not hold true in this case given that Tabriz is diglossic in Azeri and Farsi rather than Azeri and English. Moreover, if the sign initiator intended to reach tourists, the sign should have been in Farsi and English for national and international tourists to understand the sign, i.e. for "cross-cultural consumption" (Sayer, 2010, p. 146). The current sign ignores the national tourists as they are not typically proficient enough to understand contents in English and Azeri.

Reh (2004) further argues that duplicating multilingual writing may be used in reaction to affective aspects of communication, that is, a situation where using only one language ensures comprehension of text. In such a situation, using more than one language in signs serves identity purposes and suggests the equality of linguistic and cultural groups in a given area (Reh, 2004, pp. 8-9). This argument cannot hold true in this example either. Firstly, a portion of the population in Tabriz, though small, is from other cities who do not understand Azeri. Secondly, although the presence of Azeri on this sign may serve identity purposes and mark the Azeri geographical territory (Landry & Bourhis, 1997), it is highly unlikely to show the equality of linguistic and cultural groups given that there are no English-speaking communities in Tabriz. In addition, if such bilingual signs were to suggest equality of linguistic groups, one would expect them to be in Azeri and Farsi firstly, and secondly, the numerical distribution of such signs over the city should have been nearly equal, unlike the present dominance of Farsi only and Farsi/English signs. Thirdly, the types of such signs, i.e. color, size of the font, and languages used on the sign, should have been constant all over the city. The type and color of signs in Figures 5.3 and 5.4 suggest that they have been erected by the same governmental institution. However, different code preference pattern in these two signs (Figures 5.3 and 5.4) suggests a no-policy situation which can arguably work against Azeri's vitality in the long run.

The absence of Farsi from the top-down governmental signage further creates Discourse(s) implying Azeri nationalism which seems to be paradoxical. It is paradoxical and surprising in that these signs are put up by governmental intuitions. The denial of Farsi on these signs clearly suggests the denial of Iranian identity posing a challenge to the national integrity of the county. Given the small number of these signs (2 signs in this data

set), more research should be carried out to investigate where these signs originate from, and what ideologies the sign initiators hold.



Figure 5.4: Azeri/English sign (Type E)

The analysis of language policies in the top-down domain of linguistic landscapes in Tabriz demonstrates the state's ideologies and attitudes towards languages. Like the education system where there are no supportive policies for Azeri (as discussed in chapter four), the data analysis above suggests the same situation for Azeri in the top-down LL in Tabriz. Below, the dynamics of language use in the bottom-up LL in Tabriz is discussed. As noted above, because the bottom-up domain of public signage provides a potential space for bottom-up language agency and activism, it can show to what extent, if at all, a minority group uses its ethnic heritage language in writing suggesting people's acceptance of or resistance against language policies of the state. An analysis of Azeris' language use in the bottom-up signage in Tabriz is presented here to examine Azeris' linguistic behavior in the linguistic landscape in the light of their literacy rate in Azeri. Such an analysis can establish a link between educational policies discussed in the previous chapter and Azeris' linguistic behavior in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz.

## 5.5 Bottom-up signs in Tabriz: An indicator of language change

Of the total number of 455 signs, 292 signs were identified as bottom-up. Based on the language(s) used on signs, bottom-up signs including signs on shop windows and any signs put up outside shops by the owner, graffiti, and signs on private houses were



categorized into five types of signs; a) Farsi only signs, b) Farsi signs with English equivalent, c) English only signs, d) Arabic only signs and, e) Azeri only signs.

Language of signs	Number of signs (percentage)
Farsi only	234 (80%)
Farsi & English	49 (17%)
Arabic	1(0.34%)
English only	7 (2.31%)
Azeri only	1(0.34%)

Table 5.2: The number of signs in different languages in bottom-up signage in Tabriz

As table 5.2 shows, Type A, i.e. Farsi only signs, constitute the highest number of signs in bottom-up signage, that is, 234 signs out of the total of 292. Type B, i.e. bilingual signs using Farsi and English, occupied the second-most prominent place. These signs had the name of the shop or business written in Farsi with their English translation or transliteration below or next to the Farsi words. The statistics shown in the table above clearly demonstrates the dominance of Farsi and English and the absence of Azeri on the bottom-up LL in the city of Tabriz.



Figure 5.5: Farsi-only bottom-up sign

The absence of Azeri and the dominance of Farsi in the bottom-up LL in Tabriz can be plausibly explained using the first and second rules proposed by Spolsky and Cooper (1991). As discussed above, two major factors influencing the presence/absence of language in the LL can be sign writers and sign readers' ability to read and write in a language(s) (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991, pp. 81-84). To address the impact of Azeris' literacy in Azeri and Farsi on their linguistic behavior in the LL, two questions in an attitude questionnaire administered to parents of young children (see chapter three) asked the respondents to rate their abilities in the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in Azeri and Farsi from 1 to 10, one having almost no ability and 10 having the ability of a native speaker's. These questions were designed to examine the impact of the educational policies to promote the official language on the linguistic proficiency of Azeris in Azeri and Farsi. The data analysis yielded the following means for each skill in Azeri and Farsi.

	Speaking	Comprehension	Reading	Writing
Azeri	9.44	9.64	6.33	5.54
Farsi	7.92	9.03	9.28	9.31

Table 5.3: The mean for Azeris' abilities in four skills in Azeri and Farsi

As table 5.3 demonstrate, the participants reported they had higher abilities in speaking and listening comprehension of Azeri than reading and writing skills. In addition, the Azeri participants reported a higher ability in reading and writing Farsi compared to their reading and writing ability in Azeri. The discrepancy between Azeri's ability in reading and writing Azeri and Farsi can be plausibly attributed to the Farsi-only education system in Iran, as discussed in chapter four. It appears that the institutionalization of Farsi has converted Azeri into more of an oral language. The presence of some literacy among Azeris, however, could be attributed to the common writing system between Azeri and Farsi, i.e. Perso-Arabic alphabet, as well as a long history of literacy in Tabriz. More in-depth research needs be conducted to find out where and from what activities literacy among Azeris originates.

The results of Paired samples t-tests carried out illustrate that the difference between the means shown in tables 5.3 is highly significant. The tests were run on four pairs, namely, speaking Azeri and Farsi, comprehending Azeri and Farsi, reading Azeri and Farsi, and writing Azeri and Farsi. The p value for all the tests were calculated at .00,

indicating that there is a significant difference between the abilities in two languages in each pair (see table 5.4).

Pair	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Speaking Azeri Speaking Farsi</b>	1.523	2.408	6.544	106	.000
<b>Comprehending Azeri Comprehending Farsi</b>	.607	1.692	3.714	106	.000
<b>Reading Azeri Reading Farsi</b>	-2.953	3.100	-9.854	106	.000
<b>Writing Azeri Writing Farsi</b>	-3.766	3.293	-11.832	106	.000

Table 5.4: Paired samples t-test results

Azeri participants' lower literacy compared to Farsi, in the light of Spolsky and Cooper's (1991), first and second rules, can be arguably seen as one of the reasons for the absence of Azeri and the dominance of Farsi in the linguistic landscape of Tabriz. Azeris seem to be either not able to use Azeri in a written domain such as LL, or assume the reader would not be able to comfortably read the Azeri sign. We could then argue that Farsi is apparently used to guarantee a successful communication between the sign writer/owner and the sign reader.

As noted above, literacy in a language is not the only factor influencing language use in the LL. As Shohamy (2006, p. 123) argues, although the primary drive for public signage is the market principle, the political and ideological considerations should be taken into account. In other words, language(s) are not always used in the LL to transmit factual information, but for its "connotational value" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006). That is, literacy in a language and using signs to transmit information is not the only factor playing a role in language choice in the linguistic landscape, and the symbolic use of language(s) in the LL (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) should be also considered.

The presence of English in the signage put up by Azeris (49 signs, 17%) in Tabriz where English is not used as a language of wider communication functions as an index of social stereotypes of modernity, progress, and globalization (Piller, 2003, p. 170) rather than a "spatial presence" of an "ethnolinguistic community" (Androutsopoulos, 2014, p. 83). On these signs, the linguistic medium rather than the content of signs convey particular meanings (Sayer, 2010). That is, languages such as English are used to "symbolize foreign taste and manners" rather than index a community speaking those languages (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 118). The "iconic" use of English (Sayer, 2010) on the signage erected by private businesses in Tabriz suggests that Azeris use English

symbolically to communicate concepts such as modernity, progress, success, and international orientation although they may not be able to read or write English.

A parallel can be plausibly drawn between the symbolic use of English as an internationally prestigious language and Farsi as the nationally prestigious language in Tabriz. Farsi, as the official language, which has been institutionalized in other domains, enjoys a higher prestige and status compared to Azeri. Besides Azeris' lower literacy in Azeri and higher literacy in Farsi, as shown above, the dominance of Farsi in the bottom-up signage can be arguably attributed to the higher prestige, status, and value of Farsi as well (see chapter four). By using Farsi in bottom-up signage, Azeri people seem to achieve two main goals. Firstly, they guarantee a successful communication not only with other Azeris but also potential tourists and visitors from other cities of Iran, given the fact that Farsi functions the lingua franca in Iran. Secondly, by using Farsi, they enjoy its higher prestige and status in their business. Like English which symbolizes internationalization and globalization, Farsi too can be said to connote official recognition, success and progress at the national level.

Ben-Rafael, et al. (2006) argue that bottom-up signage may manifest covert policies of a community on the one hand, and cultural identity and aspiration of its members, on the other. The dominance of Farsi and the absence of Azeri in locally-produced signs could accordingly suggest that the educational policies of the state to promote Farsi as an institutionalized 'written' language have been successful in the case of Azeri in Tabriz leading to particular de facto policies (Shohamy, 2006). This could be one of the reasons explaining why Azeris, with a lower literacy in their ethnic language, do not use the language in the macro written domain of the public sphere. This in turn has resulted in the absence of manifestations of cultural identity in the linguistic landscape of the city implicitly suggesting Azeris aspirations to be identified with Farsi and the mainstream Farsi-speaking community.

Moreover, given that Azeris typically are not proficient users of English, Azeris seem to be using English in the bottom-up LL primarily because of its symbolic value rather than pragmatic and informational. The sign owner, identifying his/her business if not himself/herself with English and the English speaking community, is trying to attribute more prestige to his/her business through English as a global language, bringing to the mind of the audience qualities such as power, prestige, superior quality or commercial value, modernity, and economic value (Kasanga, 2012, p. 560). The data analysis suggests that English in bottom-up private signs in Tabriz fulfils little or no informational function.

Rather, the omnipresence of English in LL in Tabriz can be said to mark the emerging process of globalization (Cenoz & Gorter, 2009, p. 57).

## 5.6 Discussion

Language use in the top-down and bottom-up domains of the linguistic landscape of Tabriz was examined above to explore the language policies in the public sphere as well as illuminate the dynamics of grass-roots language use in a written domain in Tabriz. Top-down governmental linguistic tokens, as noted, are very likely to index the overt policies in a state. These tokens, in this sense, become the markers of power and status of groups and their languages. By contrast, bottom-up, individual and locally produced signage may be a manifestation of covert policies of a community on the one hand, and cultural identity and aspirations of its members, on the other. Together, the linguistic landscape analysis is able to provide a window into the effect of globalization and language contact in multilingual settings (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006). The findings of this chapter can be discussed under the three sections of the dominance of Farsi, presence of English, and absence of Azeri both in the official and private signs.

The analysis of the linguistic landscape data illustrated the dominance of Farsi in both governmental and private signs. The dominance of Farsi in the bottom-up signage suggests two points. Firstly, Farsi has been institutionalized as the written language which is apparently more convenient for Azeris to use for writing. This cannot, however, be separated from Azeris' lower literacy in Azeri. Secondly, Farsi enjoys higher status and prestige giving it an added value. As a result, by using Farsi, Azeri people can guarantee successful communication among themselves and with potential visitors from other cities, as well as being identified with speakers of a language of higher status and prestige. The higher status and prestige of Farsi can be extended to top-down domain of signage as well. Symbolically, the dominance of Farsi in official governmental signs not only reflects its institutional and political power over Azeri, but it also contributes to the (Discursive) institutionalization of the official language of the state. Farsi is unsurprisingly the most commonly-used language because it is the official language, the language of education, official transactions, judiciary, a powerful symbol of nationalism and national identity. Farsi's high visibility, thus, can be an indication of its prominent role at the national level, as well as its status and prestige. As Williams's (2008) notes, top-down signs are "the iconographic representation of nationalist symbols in the landscape" (Williams, 2008, p.

26). As such the linguistic landscape can be seen as a language policy mechanism through which particular attitudes and perceptions about languages are instilled in the society.

The absence of Azeri from the bottom-up signs in Tabriz, as noted above, can be arguably attributed to educational policies which have resulted in relatively lower literacy in Azeri. Having a weaker ability in reading and writing Azeri compared to Farsi, Azeris seem to feel more comfortable to read and write in Farsi rather than Azeri. As discussed above, another contributing factor for the absence of Azeri from Azeri people's signs can be Azeri's lower status and prestige. While the absence of Azeri from the private signs can be attributed to literacy and prestige issues, the absence of Azeri from the official signs cannot be related to such issues. Rather, the absence of Azeri from the top-down domain of the LL in Tabriz suggests the state's ideologies and explicit policies. It can be argued that there are no explicit supportive and protective policies to promote and promulgate the use of Azeri in the public space which could have been regarded as a type of institutional support. Symbolically, such an absence (Discursively) constructs a weak and marginalized community who speaks Azeri. Furthermore, such policies in the LL can be taken as an attempt to index Tabriz as a city where Azeri is not spoken. To summarize, given that the meaning, value, and power of language(s) can be derived from their presence in space (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010, p. 10), the data analysis suggests that the presence of Azeri as the local and ethnic language of Azeri people in Tabriz is neither acknowledged nor supported in the top-down LL of Tabriz. This has led to an absence of "metacultural representation and practice - where "metacultural" refers to cultural practices that communicate cultural difference" (Coupland & Garrett, 2010, p. 14), which can be attributed to the impact of macro official laws and regulations within LL and domains outside LL (e.g. the education system).

In the case of English, there seems to be one main similarity and one main difference between using English in the official signage and private LL in Tabriz. Both the state and Azeri individuals can be said to try to symbolically represent the country as a modern, international, and successful country which reflects the state and Azeris' awareness of the status, prestige, and the associations attached to English. The main difference, however, is that Azeris mostly make use of English in the bottom-up signage only as an iconic language (e.g. in the form of shop names appearing in English). This means that a large portion of the English usage is to activate values attached to English as a highly prestigious international language rather than transmit factual information. By

contrast, English is used in the top-down signage to transmit factual information such as directions, requests, etc. (e.g. in the form of traffic signs).

In sum, I have argued that language use in the LL is under the constant influence of two forces, namely, the macro official policies and the people's personal choices, desires, and motivations. These forces are realized through writing in public, which is seen as an influential tool to secure institutional authority because it embodies power and resistance, i.e. a tool which can also be turned and used against the powers (Coulmas, 2009, p. 14). The outcome of the "battle" (Shohamy, 2006) in the linguistic landscape between groups and their languages, therefore, would fall between the two extremes of total assimilation into and resistance against the declared policies stated by the dominant group. It can be argued that in total assimilation, one would find almost no difference in languages used in top-down and bottom-up signage in bilingual contexts. By contrast, in total resistance, the difference in languages used in both types of signage would be noticeable. This comparison may also indicate the vitality of languages within a community.

The comparison between the top-down and bottom-up LL make-up of the city suggests that Azeri has lost the linguistic landscape "battle" (Shohamy, 2006), leading to a lack of resistance in the bottom-up LL. The analysis also indicates the low, or around zero, vitality of Azeri in Tabriz as a written language, i.e. it is predominantly used as an aural/oral language. The contributing factors, such as the lack of linguistic proficiency in Azeri and higher symbolic value of Farsi and English, has led to the current LL composition of the city, suggesting a total assimilation of Azeris into the dominant culture in the domain of language use in the public space.

Given that "unequal distribution and prominence of languages in the LL stems from differential levels of vitality and stereotypes attached to each" (Kasanga, 2012, p. 565), the LL in Tabriz can be argued to serve as "a mechanism to affect, manipulate and impose de facto language practices in hidden and covert ways" (Shohamy, 2006, p. 111). As argued in chapter two, such manipulations are carried out Discursively creating a particular ecology for languages. That is, particular language use patterns implicitly convey certain messages to audience with respect to what group(s) and language(s) are valued.

Moreover, linguistic landscape in Tabriz can be said to run both ahead of and behind the actual (objective or subjective) ethnolinguistic vitality of Azeri (Coupland & Garrett, 2010). It runs behind the actual ethnolinguistic vitality of Azeri because it depicts a loss of writing and reading domain which has already taken place. It also runs ahead of

the actual ethnolinguistic vitality in that it is very likely to be an indication of even a greater loss for Azeris in future. It would be also fair to claim that the LL items in Tabriz are not a faithful representative of the people's linguistic repertoire. That is, Azeri in Tabriz is certainly not an extinct language, although it is hard to find Azeri signs, and English is not actively used for communication, although it is actively present in the LL of the city. The current language use pattern in the LL of Tabriz, thus, suggests the people and institutions make use of the linguistic resources in order to symbolically construct a public sphere they desire and aspire to (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006; Coupland, 2010). It is this gap between the real and complete linguistic repertoire and what is seen in the public use of languages that indicates the actual role of language policy and its scope within a community (Negro, 2009, p. 216). Given that the number and type of multilingual written texts in a particular area is dependent on factors such as "the number of languages present, language policy, the status of speakers, the self-esteem of speakers, the reader-orientation of text suppliers," the numerical distribution and type of these texts on signs can reflect "the social layering within a community" (Reh, 2004, p. 1). As the numerical distribution of languages on the signs in this study suggests, the social layering in Tabriz can be claimed to be as follows. Farsi and Farsi speaking people have been given the highest priority. English and the English speaking communities are seen as the second most important groups. Azeri and Azeri speaking people seem to be considered to be the least significant group in the city, displaying symbolic power of languages (see Rosendal, 2009).

## 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored de facto language policies in the linguistic landscape in Tabriz to investigate what type(s) of Discourse(s) are mainstreamed within this domain. The chapter has shown how "language shift of formal and written language is caused or consciously facilitated (i.e., by conquest or other major dislocations of the status quo)" (Fishman, 2006, p. 318). The data analysis has suggested that the exclusion of Azeri as the autochthonous language, and the symbolic use of Farsi and English, i.e. "double symbolism" (Atkinson & Kelly-Holmes, 2006, p. 254) in the LL in Tabriz, has led to what Atkinson and Kelly-Holmes (2006, p. 254) call "a double disenfranchisement of the minoritised variety." This seems to have resulted in Azeris' lack of devotion, and perhaps negative attitudes and perceptions, to using their native ethnic language in the LL which is



of great importance for Azeri maintenance. Such a double disenfranchisement of Azeri can endanger its vitality and maintenance in Tabriz in the long term.

The next chapter investigates the policies with respect to another important domain, i.e. broadcasting media. The data analysis in this chapter shows the only available TV channel for Azeris is in fact used as a vehicle for Discourse planning, i.e. to disseminate and distil particular attitudes in Tabriz. Examining the impact of satellite channels on Azeris in Tabriz, the chapter explores how the lack of attractive programs on Azeri local channel can bring about unintended outcomes.

## **Chapter Six: The Media: A Discursive Space**

### **6.0 Introduction**

The analysis of (de facto) policies in the education system and linguistic landscapes in the previous chapters suggested a lack of protective policies for Azeri, thus contributing to Discursively shaping an undesirable ecology for Azeri. As a corollary, Azeri is not regarded as a default choice for writing. This chapter examines de facto policies in the broadcast media, arguably one of the most important types of institutional support for minority groups (Giles, et al., 1977). It is argued that the relative presence of languages in the media can function as a contributing factor in the formation of positive image of languages and their speakers (Hult, 2010b), raising the status of languages not only in the eyes of speakers of the minority languages, but also in the eyes of the speakers of the majority languages (Bell, 2010; de Bres, 2010). This "prestige factor" is considered very important to children within minority communities because "they hold the key to the minority language's future" (Howel, 1992, p. 217).

In the last fifteen years, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has established provincial channels which broadcast programs in regional and minority languages. The airtime for programs in the regional language varies from channel to channel. In line with promoting minority languages, Sahand TV, the provincial channel covering East Azerbaijan, but not limited to East Azerbaijan, was established in 2000. The chapter aims to illuminate the functionality of Sahand TV which can be considered, along with Radio Tabriz<sup>12</sup>, to be a type of institutional support for Azeri provided by the government. Although the central government has taken a step to promote minority languages by establishing provincial channels, exploring language use patterns on the channel (de facto policies) suggests a different scenario.

### **6.1 Media and language policy and planning**

Language policy and planning processes are closely integrated within the social, cultural, political and economic ecology (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, pp. 310-320; Spolsky, 2004, p. ix; 2009, p. 1). Media outlets, both as "a domain" for language use (Fishman, 1974a; 1991; 2001) and a "social institution" (Lundsten, 1999), are considered to be key

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<sup>12</sup> Radio Tabriz also airs Azeri and Farsi programs, and thus, can be regarded as a type of institutional support. It has not been included in this thesis for two main reasons, however. Firstly, a focus-group interview with mothers of young children and interviews with children revealed that Radio Tabriz does not have many listeners. Secondly, television is considered a much stronger medium than radio given the captivating visual nature of the television medium (e.g. see Hult, 2010b, p. 161).

components of the ecology (Cormack, 2007b; Hult, 2010b), and key agents in the "political economy of language" (Spitulnik, 1999). The significance of the media comes from their potential capacity not to merely "reflect events," but also "create" them. It is argued that this "creative function" of the media is not "spontaneous," but "planned, planted, and incited" (Bell, 2010; Berg, 1972, p. 256). It is maintained that this creative function of the media is Discursive, i.e. the media Discursively constructs "specific language regimes through, for example, the ways in which languages are represented in public discourse and language problems are defined" (Hult, 2010b, p. 160; Lo Bianco, 2005). In other words, as argued in chapter two, media outlets are engaged in what can be labeled *Discourse planning* (see chapter two). By giving different values and exposure to different linguistic varieties, the media legitimate the socioeconomic and political dominance of some social groups over the others. The media are accordingly regarded as important sites for "ethnolinguistic representation and the production of language ideologies" (Spitulnik, 1999, p. 149), and "discursive space" serving as "a window into contemporary processes of social change" (Heller, 2010, p. 280).

The role of the media in both majority and minority language politics, as a domain in which "language conflicts play out" and in which "the linguistic order of a policy is (re)produced," has been well documented (Hult, 2010b, p. 159). Reviewing research carried out in Japan, Cyprus, and Dutch, Flemish, German-Swiss communities, Hult writes that the media, especially radio and television, function as a language policy agent to elevate or to perpetuate the already-elevated status of languages used on those media. Sung-Yul Park (2010) similarly shows how Korean national television channels "rationalize and naturalize ideologies of linguistic nationalism" by not only reaching their audience in the national language but also guiding and "correcting" the language of ordinary citizens (p. 76). The choice of linguistic code in television programming, or generally in mass media, is seen as "the communicative space of the nation-state," which conveys meanings about the power relations between linguistic varieties and the speech communities associated with them (Lin, 2009, p. 311). In such circumstances, as Karam (1974) argues, the mass media serve as "agents of conventionalization" providing people with "models of imitation of prestigious spoken and printed usage" (p. 116). As a consequence, media functions as a contributing factor in the "creation and reproduction of sociolinguistic inequalities" by bestowing preference on the dominant language over the others (Lin, 2009, p. 312).

To create and (re)produce sociolinguistic inequalities, the media serving dominant groups often attempt to stigmatize minority languages and their speakers, in extreme cases through what Alia and Bull describe as "imput[ing] filth to ethnic minorities" (Alia & Bull, 2005, p. 15). Emphasizing that media are not just "innocent bystanders and neutral observers," but they are "culpable" (p. 15), Alia and Bull report on various cases in which media were used against minorities. They argue that an overemphasis on drunkenness and crime among Australian aboriginals and Maori people in New Zealand in the 1950s, for example, resulted in the projection of a biased image of those peoples. It is in such circumstances that dominant cultures use the media to present and defend images of themselves as "competent and unblemished" at the expense of ethnic minority groups (p. 85). And it is in such circumstances that "minority people find their voices silenced in many spheres" (Alia & Bull, 2005, p. 73). Alia and Bull (2005) and Browne (2007) argue that the minority media can undo such a silence for minority communities and become a voice for the voiceless minorities, contributing to language maintenance endeavors.

Based on the relative success of dominant media outlets in the (re)production and dissemination of language ideologies in their interest, the media are consequently considered important for minority communities (Giles, et al., 1977). Bell (2010), for instance, writes that broadcasting media stand second in importance after education for the vitality of Maori in New Zealand. One of the main roles, perhaps the most important one, attributed to ethnic minority media in language maintenance is the status-building nature of the media (Bell, 2010; de Bres, 2010; Giles, et al., 1977; Ó Laoire, 2000). Considered as a major institutional support (Giles, et al., 1977), it is believed that the media can raise the status of languages not only in the eyes of speakers of the minority languages, but also in the eyes of the speakers of the majority languages (Bell, 2010; de Bres, 2010). As Bell (2010) puts it, languages which are not used in prestigious domains such as the media are not regarded as having an instrumental value in the wider society which might indicate to speakers that their language has no status and it is not "worth their while to talk it" (p. 12). In other words, "the role of language in broadcasting is circular," i.e. the use of a particular language in broadcasting is an indication of its high status and it in return enhances its status (Bell, 2010, p. 9). The existence of the media in minority languages is, thus, likely to challenge some minorities' perceptions of the languages as old-fashioned, rural and backward. Associating with new media and technology, a minority language might be seen as a contemporary, living tool (Cunliffe, 2007, p. 134). This "prestige factor" is considered very important for the vitality and maintenance of languages because it can influence the

attitudes and perceptions of minority communities, especially children. (Howel, 1992, p. 217). By virtue of the fact that minority people see lives like their own on television materialized in and through their ethnic language, they see an extension of domains in which their language is spoken, making them view their language as prestigious and as useful as other "bigger" languages. That is perhaps why Howel (1992) argues that languages depend on broadcasting, along with parents and teachers' diligent efforts to transmit a language to the next generation, for their continuation and survival. Television and radio, among the mass media, are seen as the most influential vehicles for transmitting languages and national and popular cultures to the next generation (Howel, 1992, p. 217). It is believed that this might affect the language of the home in the long run (Ní Neachtain, 2000; Ó Laoire, 2000), making parents and children more loyal and committed to their ethnic language.

Media, particularly broadcasting media, are also regarded as key elements of "empowerment" of a minority language, i.e. "an expression of the degree to which a minority language is invested legally, economically and socially.... for an effective struggle against competing majority languages" (Aitchison & Carter, 1997, p. 357). Summarizing the functions of broadcasting media into the five categories "communicative, cultural, economic, status and linguistic," Jones (2007) similarly argues that the media are vital for the well-being of a community. According to Jones, these functions may lead to higher status of that language, its added use and usefulness in the community, a richer linguistic repertoire of the community, stronger collective identity of the community and its economic development (Jones, 2007, pp. 190-191). Power to control agendas in public discussion and access to opinion-forming sources to promote language interests are considered necessary elements of empowerment which can ease intergenerational transmission to a great extent (Aitchison & Carter, 1997). Because the media, especially television, represents a high status domain, the ways in which languages are used in the media can convey the comparative importance of languages in a given society (Cooper, 1989, p. 32). Media, as a strong status-building tool and institutional support for minorities, is, therefore, seen as an instrument for minority empowerment (Downin, 1992, p. 256).

The presence of ethnic minority groups and their languages in the media can also benefit those marginalized groups and their languages in the political arena. Because the media makes it possible for some sense of public sphere to develop, it is impossible for a community to develop politically without having access to and being present on the media

(Cormack, 2007b). Furthermore, the presence of a minority language in the areas of public discourse, i.e. mass media, prevents its exclusion from being viewed as "natural and inevitable" (Tollefson, 1991, p. 12). The presence of minority groups and their languages on the media may enable them to stand up to other neighboring communities, which can serve as a contributing factor to language maintenance. This is usually achieved by developing "critical mass," a necessary condition to preserve languages, leading to a stronger cultural identity (Alia & Bull, 2005, p. 115). As Hult (2010b) notes, the relative presence or absence of languages in the public sphere can function as a contributing factor in the formation of the image of languages and their speakers within "discourses of nationality" (Hult, 2010b, p. 160).

Despite the media being used as a mechanism to diffuse and promote language ideologies (Shohamy, 2006; Stuart-Smith, 2006), reliance on the media to support minority languages has been critiqued, leading to skepticism about the benefits of the media for minority groups and their languages. Referring to the impact of the media on encouraging minority communities to shift to dominant languages, Spolsky (2008b, p. 152) expresses doubts about the role of the media in language maintenance or reversing language shift. Posing the question "Can the instrument of defeat be turned into a method of defence?" Spolsky argues that the reliance on the media, television in particular, in language maintenance or reversing language shift seems to come from the influential role of the media in language shift processes across the globe. Similarly, Fishman (2001), labeling the enthusiasm of minority media activists as "fetish," expresses skepticism with respect to the role of the media in reversing language shift. He maintains that lower-scale face-to-face interactions can never be solely seen as a by-product of higher- scale domains and institutions such as the media and education system (Fishman, 1991, p. 4). That is, the assumption of the existence of some sort of a "domino effect" between domains, i.e. "once a (high-status) domain is lost to a superposed language, others are sure to follow," does not hold true (Boyd, 2011, p. 30).

These critiques seem to originate from the complexity of the issue of language maintenance on the one hand, and the inability to isolate the influence of broadcasting from other social factors at work (Bell, 2010; Browne, 1996; Moring, 2007), on the other. This has resulted in a paucity of empirical evidence showing the impact of broadcasting, if any, on language maintenance. As a result of the failure to establish such a cause-and-effect relation between media and behavior, Cormack (2007b, p. 63) argues that validating

such a relation is likely to be "gross simplification and distortion" (cf. Emmett, 1966; Stuart-Smith, 2006).

Although arguments made by Spolsky, Fishman, and Boyd about the impact of the media on language maintenance appear logical, they cannot be necessarily understood as undermining the role of the media in language maintenance and/or reversing language shift processes. Spolsky's question, rather than being a wholesale denial of the role of the media, suggests one important point; that is, the media has served the dominant group as an instrument of defeat. However, its service for minority communities as a method of defense remains a topic of debate. This implies that not all the minority media work in favor of ethnic minority groups and their languages. As Riggins argues, mere allocation of time, money and broadcasting space to minorities should not be taken as "spontaneous gestures of goodwill". A state might have "inconsistent policies promoting minority media while simultaneously following policies of containment and repression" (Riggins, 1992a, p. 8). Then, as Heller (2010, p. 278) writes, "it matters what relationship specific media spaces bear to the State, and what kinds of regulation may operate them."

The same argument applies to assertions made by Fishman and Boyd. The key words in their discussion are "solely" and "sure" and assuming total dependence on the media to maintain languages. Although Fishman (1991) pointedly stresses that the media can never replace face-to-face communication, intergenerational transmission in particular (see also Ó Laoire, 2000), he implicitly agrees with the importance of the media in the fate of languages by placing the media in the top two levels of the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). It is certainly unrealistic to assume an ineluctable cause and effect relation between the media and language behavior. Yet, the part the media play in diffusing linguistic norms and values cannot be neglected in sociolinguistic studies (Stuart-Smith, 2006).

The debate between those who believe in the impact of the media on behavior and perceptions (e.g. Korhonen & Lahikainen, 2008; Muto, 2004), and by extension on language maintenance and ethnic identity (Baetens Beardsmore & Van Beeck, 1984; Bell, 2010; Cormack, 2007b; Howel, 1992), and those critiquing the existence of such an effect (e.g. Cormack, 2007b), has made some take a different approach to investigate about the nature of media. These scholars argue that talking about the "effects" of media on behavior might be a mistake and "barking up the wrong tree" (Heller, 2010, p. 279; Riggins, 1992a). Instead, the media is framed as "discursive space" whose regulators, participants and consumers should be identified. And, issues such as "who controls it, what kinds of

interest they may have, the way they do it, and what consequences this may have for ranges of speakers who control diverse arrays of linguistic resources" should be investigated (Heller, 2010, p. 278). In other words, the media are regarded as sites where language ideologies are constructed, reproduced, contested and modified (Heller, 2010). In this sense, the media can function as space for minorities to voice themselves, challenging the legitimating ideologies which are produced on other media outlets, ultimately contributing to language maintenance endeavors (Alia & Bull, 2005; Browne, 2007).

Discourse(s) the media create through manipulating the presence/absence of languages in their programs can have clear implications for status planning and prestige planning for those languages and their speakers. The following sections accordingly examine language choice pattern in relation to various programs broadcast on Sahand TV, indicating the types of Discourse(s) (re)produced and disseminated on this medium. The analysis aims to shed light on underlying ideologies as well as the nature of the medium, showing to what extent, if at all, it is a tool for "cultural preservation" or it contributes to the "assimilation of ethnic minority audiences to the dominant culture" (see also Watson, 1996; Williams, 2007).

## **6.2 Representation of languages on Sahand TV**

During phase one of the data collection between January 2011 and June 2011, Sahand TV programs were recorded for analysis. Like linguistic landscapes data collection (see chapter three and five), the main methodological issue in media research is sampling data from the amount of data available for collection and analysis. As a result, a constructed week was used as the sampling method to get a fair representation of programs (see Hester & Dougall, 2007, for the efficiency of constructed week sampling). Using this method was very important because the type of programs vary on days associated with certain religious and cultural events and ceremonies. The constructed week sampling method involved selecting one day in each week for recording for the period of seven weeks when the constructed week was complete. Each recording took around 12 hours because Sahand TV broadcasting time was between 12 pm and 12 midnight at the time of data collection<sup>13</sup>.

Two main methodological issues arose in collecting this data set, namely categorizing programs based on the language in which they were aired, and how to deal

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<sup>13</sup> Sahand TV broadcast 24 hours a day at the moment. However, the programs broadcast after 12 midnight are the reruns of the previous day.



with code-switching, if any. Categorizing programs based on the languages in which they were broadcast was not a difficult undertaking. Programs aired in Arabic were essentially limited to prayers time which included broadcasting verses of Qur'an and praying. No code-switching was observed in these programs. It is worth noting though that the translation of the Qur'anic verses appearing on the screen was all in Farsi. This again reinforces the argument made in the previous chapters that Azeri is not a default choice when it comes to writing. Code-switching was not observed in Farsi-programs either, making their categorization as Farsi programs unchallenging. These programs were either imported from other Farsi channels or produced in Farsi in Tabriz by Azeris themselves for a special audience (see below).

Code-switching from Azeri to Farsi is now a common phenomenon (Hawes & Mirvahedi, 2013; Holmes, 2013). Given that Azeri has been overwhelmed by Farsi in different domains and institutions over the last one hundred years (see chapter one), Azeri includes a wide range of Farsi vocabulary, idioms and expressions realized in the form of inter- and intra-sentential code-switching . Azeri programs broadcast on Sahand TV were not an exception. Programs were labeled as Azeri in the table above based on the main language in which they were aired. The writing appearing on the screen was again overwhelmingly in Farsi except for names of a few programs. Inter- and intra-sentential code-switching incidents were not taken as an influential factor affecting the analysis. A separate research project is required to explore the degree to which as well as what type of code-switching takes place on Sahand TV.

	Thursday April 21, 2011	Friday April 29, 2011	Saturday May 7, 2011	Sunday May 15, 2011	Monday May 23, 2011	Tuesday May 31, 2011	Wednesday June 8, 2011
<b>Azeri</b>	40.18 % 288 min	55.94% 391 min	37.27 % 265 min	55.15% 423 min	45.15% 298 min	35.82 % 245 min	55.62% 327 min
<b>Farsi</b>	53.55% 384 min	38.91% 272 min	58.09% 413 min	39.90% 306 min	48.63% 321 min	58.33% 399 min	39.28% 231 min
<b>Arabic</b>	6.27 % 45 min	5.15% 36 min	4.64% 33 min	4.95% 38 min	6.22% 41 min	5.85% 40 min	5.10% 30 min

Table 6.1: Airtime for Arabic, Azeri, and Farsi programs

Table 6.1 clearly shows that Azeri and Farsi programs were each allocated the most airtime every day. However, there seems to be no particular pattern. Azeri programs dominated Sahand TV airtime on some days and Farsi programs dominated on others. Arabic programs, by contrast, were allocated the least airtime presumably because Arabic

is not a language of wider communication in Tabriz. Given that Arabic, as the language of Islam, is only used for religious purposes, it seems likely that Arabic on Sahand TV has a symbolic function (c.f. Paul, 1999). By and large, as table 6.2 shows, nearly half of the airtime over the constructed week was allocated to each of Azeri and Farsi program categories.

The language of the program	Duration in minute	Duration in percentage
<b>Azeri</b>	2237 min	47.30 %
<b>Farsi</b>	2231 min	47.15 %
<b>Arabic</b>	263 min	5.55 %
<b>Total</b>	4731 min	100 %

Table 6.2: The mean for airtime for Arabic, Azeri, and Farsi programs in seven days

Bell (2010) and Georgiou (2010) argue that broadcast media not only mirror the society's norms but also have the potential to lead. Investigation of broadcast media can then yield two types of information, namely what are the norms and values in the society, and what are the policy makers seeking to achieve through media. In other words, the analysis of programs broadcast on a channel can both reflect existing norms and values in the society as well as (re)producing those norms and values. This (re)production of norms and values, as argued in this chapter and chapter two, is conducted by providing role-models for the audience to follow, i.e. Discourse planning.

The data set presented in tables 6.1 and 6.2 above provides some evidence of the current linguistic order, i.e. bilingualism, in Tabriz on the one hand, and the role Sahand TV might play in Discourse planning on the other, i.e. it can be considered a tool to "(re)produce the current linguistic order" (Hult, 2010b, p. 172). Sahand TV's programming can, therefore, be construed as a kind of mirror which reflects policy-making body's potential desire and intention to establish a bilingual society in Tabriz, and perhaps in other Azeri-speaking cities. Given that Azeri is not the language of institutions (at least in the written domain as discussed in previous chapters), Sahand TV's programs can be interpreted as an attempt to depict and potentially perpetuate a diglossic context.

It is argued that bilingualism and a diglossic society can be a way to maintain linguistic diversity (Fishman, 1972b; O'Connell, 2007). Sahand TV's attempt to perpetuate such a context for Azeri can be then considered to be a useful institutional support for

Azeri. However, the analysis presented above provokes two further questions about Sahand TV, and thus, relying solely on the analysis above would be simplistic and misleading. Considering that there are many Farsi-only (national and international) television channels available in Tabriz, why should Farsi programs be broadcast on Sahand TV? And what might be the reasons and motivations for such programs? Although using Farsi in some programs seems inevitable, such as when a national event is going on in Tabriz which needs to be reported to the whole country, allocating equal amounts of airtime to Azeri and Farsi on Azeris' local channel does not appear to be without intention. The following section discusses the underlying ideologies and the type of Discourse(s) propagated on the medium by exploring "what communities are imagined, in the service of what sets of interests? Who is constructed as a producer of discourse" (Heller, 2010, p. 279).

### **6.3 Representations of communities on Sahand TV**

The analysis of the data set presented in table 6.3 is based on Fairclough's (1995) argument that media "representations involve particular points of view, values and goals." He writes that in media analysis, representations should be compared and evaluated "in terms of what they include and what they exclude, what they foreground and what they background, where they come from and what factors and interests influence their formulation and projection" (p. 47). Airwaves have been an important site of "contact and contestation," not only between languages but also between identities, and discourses (Garrett, 2007, p. 141). Such social identities (e.g. gender, class, ethnicity, etc.) of the media audience are constructed through the choice of topic, code, register, and style (Spitulnik, 1999). The type of Discourse(s) the provincial channel of Sahand TV seems to be trying to plan, i.e. a diglossic society, can be challenged given the following data on the types of programs and the languages in which they are aired. Comparing and contrasting types of programs broadcast in Azeri and Farsi can accordingly yield insightful results about the type of Discourse which is actually promulgated on Sahand TV.

Programs in Azeri	Programs in Farsi
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• programs about the province and its towns, and villages</li> <li>• quiz show</li> <li>• eleven o'clock news in the evening</li> <li>• religious programs</li> <li>• Azeri music</li> <li>• sports</li> <li>• some economic, political, economic forums.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• movies, TV series</li> <li>• documentaries and scientific programs</li> <li>• five o'clock news</li> <li>• children and teenagers' programs</li> <li>• Farsi music</li> <li>• sports</li> <li>• commercials</li> </ul>

Table 6.3: Types of programs broadcast in Azeri and Farsi on Sahand TV

Reflecting on the types of programs associated with the two languages, i.e. Azeri and Farsi, suggests that Sahand TV seems to be engaged in creating a particular Discourse about the two languages and their speakers. Producing programs in Farsi, particularly for children and teenagers, reinforces the idea that the policy-making body may, consciously or unconsciously (see Lo Bianco, 2005, p. 262), intend to promulgate the Discourse of uniformity by, for instance, encouraging the young generation to learn Farsi as its first language. In addition, movies, documentaries and scientific programs, usually foreign ones dubbed in Farsi, imply the higher status and usefulness of Farsi to the Azeri viewer whereas shows about villages and small towns broadcast in Azeri may deliver the message that Azeri is useless, backward and old-fashioned, and thus is a hindrance for (young) Azeris' upward socioeconomic mobility. As a response to Fairclough's questions, it can be arguably claimed that Sahand TV programs in Azeri and Farsi seem to serve Farsi and the Farsi-speaking communities by foregrounding Farsi as the language of science, economy, entertainment, and more importantly, the language of the young generation. The interests behind the formulation and projection of such images of Farsi versus Azeri and the associated communities could be seen to be the state's attempts to encourage uniformity among Azeris.

There seems to be interrelationships between the economics and politics of the media and Discourses disseminated on these media outlets on the one hand, and their usefulness for minority groups, on the other. Fairclough (1995, pp. 42-43) argues that the "economics" and "patterns of ownership" influence the type of Discourse (re)produced and propagated on the media. Building upon this argument, Caspi and Elias (2011) distinguish between three types of minority media, namely media-about, media-for, and media-by minority (see table 6.4). Caspi and Elias (2011, p. 67) suggest twelve criteria under three

main headings, initiative and design, functioning, and control. They maintain that a close analysis of these twelve criteria, i.e. initiative, ownership and financing, personnel, management, agenda, attitudes towards country of origin, attitudes towards majority, reference group, minority access and representation, political, economic and public control, can illuminate the true nature of minority media. In other words, such an analysis can throw light on where a minority medium may be located between the two poles of media-for and media-by minority, raising our attention to minority media leaders' motivation and interests and their ability to guarantee "the minority's self-expression and empowerment" (Caspi & Elias, 2011, p. 62). They argue that the most useful and effective media outlets for a minority group would be those initiated, funded and governed 'by' the minority group itself.

	<b>Media-about</b>	<b>Media-for</b>	<b>Media-by</b>
<b>Medium's language</b>	Majority language	Minority language (or a combination of both languages)	Minority language
<b>Medium oriented towards</b>	Majority	Minority	Minority
<b>Medium mostly serves</b>	Majority	Primarily majority, but also minority to some extent	Minority
<b>Minority representation in the medium</b>	Under-representation/ frequently distorted and stereotyped representation	Compensative representation	Compensative representation

Table 6.4: Mainstream media (media-about) versus minority media, taken from Caspi and Elias (2011)

In the same vein, some scholars consider it necessary for minority communities to exercise full control over financing, management, and program production of their own media, allowing programs to be designed in response to the ethnic, cultural, and informational needs of the community (Cormack, 2007a; Riggins, 1992b). Moring (2007) similarly argues that a primary condition for minority media to succeed in their mission, e.g. empowerment, which might lead to better language maintenance and/or reversing language shift, is their "institutional completeness." That is, they should be fully developed and able to work independently, as much as possible, from the dominant majority group. Moring (2007) writes that the institutional completeness of a medium is likely to assist with the "functional completeness" of a language, i.e. normalization of its use in the society, which provides a situation where a minority group can live "in" and "through" their language if they choose to do so (Moring, 2007, p. 18). This seems idealistic and difficult to achieve in reality because minority communities are often economically and politically in a lower

position, and consequently, in need of help from the dominant group. However, dominant groups may ideally provide adequate latitude and autonomy so that minority communities can have their desired media outlets. Yet, as Guyot (2007) puts it, few countries give full autonomy to their regional and local channels.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) is a corporation which has been initiated and governed by the central government. The head of the IRIB is appointed directly by the Supreme leader, and the functioning of the IRIB is supervised by a council (consisting of eight members, two representatives appointed by the President, the head of the Judiciary Branch, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and the Iranian Parliament). Given the absence of private-sector media in Iran, broadcasting media in Iran can be arguably said to be controlled and governed by the central government. Sahand TV along with all the other provincial channels as branches of the IRIB was initiated, and is owned, financed, and controlled by the IRIB. Therefore, factors mentioned by Caspi and Elias such as "initiative, ownership and financing, personnel, management, agenda, attitudes towards the majority, political control, economic control and public control, etc." (Caspi & Elias, 2011) are governed and/or supervised by the government. As a result, Sahand TV can be said to be a channel for minority because the language of the medium is a combination of minority and majority languages (see also Browne, 1996), medium is mostly oriented towards the minority although it primarily serves the majority group, and minority's representation is of compensative nature (see Caspi & Elias, 2011, p. 64). It is therefore not surprising that the Farsi and Farsi-speaking community are held in high regard.

The data analysis presented above suggests that Sahand TV suffers from a lack of "institutional completeness" (Moring, 2007) expecting to receive directives from the IRIB headquarter which has led to its current programming. As argued above, it has been suggested that the institutional incompleteness of a medium can result in the functional incompleteness of a minority language. That is, the media can influence minority people's attitudes and perceptions in a way that the people "prefer" dominant language(s) in the long run. The impact of institutional incompleteness of Sahand TV on Azeris is discussed in chapter seven.

In sum, Azeri people seem to have little or no say regarding what programs should be produced and broadcast on Sahand TV because Sahand TV is owned, financed, and controlled by the majority group. Sahand TV, as a medium for minority, has the potential to be used as a manipulative tool for assimilationist purposes by the dominant group as it is

the dominant group who owns, manages, and controls the medium. By controlling the media agenda, financial issues and budget, personnel recruitment, etc. media-for minority types can be used as a language policy agent in the hands of the powerful dominant group (Caspi & Elias, 2011). This seems to be achieved surreptitiously by giving just enough access to "lull indigenous groups and other minorities into feeling that they had an effective means to make their voices heard" (Browne, 1996, p. 235). Such policies might be referred to as "new assimilationism," because they are disguised as multiculturalism (Riggins, 1992a, p. 9), or be likened to the neutron bomb which destroys the soul of the people but leave them physically intact (Rosemarie Kuptana's speech cited in Alia and Bull (2005)). Utilizing such assimilationist policies through media help the state "to cultivate a loyal and quiescent population at a relatively low cost and thus minimize the need for the expensive application of state power" (Hoddie, 2006 p. 5).

## **6.4 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to examine the "politics of mass mediation" (Milani & Johnson, 2010, p. 4) of Sahand TV as a type of institutional support provided by the government. The question was discussed primarily from one perspective, namely the language choice and the type of programs broadcast on Sahand TV in Azeri and Farsi, and how that shapes the medium's Discursive practices. The analysis has shown how Sahand TV's institutional incompleteness is realized in practice, and what types of language attitudes and ideologies are propagated, establishing particular relationships between media content and language choices by using minority and majority language in a particular way. Given that central to the investigation of language use on the media as "discursive space" (Heller, 2010; Milani & Johnson, 2010) is the importance placed on ideology (O'Keeffe, 2011), the analysis of airtime and the type of programs broadcast in Azeri and Farsi has shed light on how Sahand TV contributes to the Discursive formation of particular ecology based on dominant group's ideology, which may have implications for the status of Azeri and Azeri maintenance in Tabriz.

The analysis above suggests that the politics and economics of Sahand TV influencing the quantity, quality, and type of programs broadcast in Azeri and Farsi play a principal role in Sahand TV's functionality. Because Sahand TV is owned, financed, and controlled by the majority group (the central government), it broadcasts programs in both Azeri and Farsi serving both majority and minority groups, making it a medium-for minority. As a consequence, Sahand TV seems to be implicitly promulgating an

assimilationist Discourse. Doing that, it can be arguably claimed that Sahand TV does not contribute to the formation and/or maintenance of desirable language ecology for Azeri. Rather, the Discourse of assimilation can potentially result in lowering the status of Azeri, accelerating the language shift process provided that it attracts enough audience.

Chapters four, five, and six have explored the language policies and discursive and/or linguistic practices in the domains of education, linguistic landscape, and the media. As argued in chapter two, these domains surrounding the domain of home each contribute to the formation of particular language ecology in Tabriz. In the following chapter, Azeri parents and children's behavior and the dynamics of family language policy in the domain of home with respect to Azeri intergenerational transmission are examined. Azeris' attitudes and responses towards educational policies, and media are explored to provide possible explanations for current family language policies. Chapter seven demonstrates how and to what extent parents and children's linguistic choice in the home is influenced by external domains.



## **Chapter Seven: Home: A pivotal domain**

### **7.0 Introduction**

Chapters four, five, and six analyzed language policies within the education system, linguistic landscape and broadcast media respectively. The analyses examined top-down pressures on Azeri in Tabriz, providing evidence of how language policies in macro domains in Tabriz contribute to the formation of an unsupportive ecology for Azeri. This chapter explores grass roots attitudes and behavior to investigate how language choice in the home is influenced by the ecology surrounding home. Both "external push factors," formed in the language ecology, and "internal pull factors" present in the community are said to be involved in language maintenance/shift processes, with the former usually directing the latter (May, 2008a, p. 146). Examining attitudes and practices at micro and grass roots level in relation to language policies at the macro level thus becomes an essential feature of an in-depth investigation (Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008). The analysis of these data sets can shed light on the extent to which bilingualism in Azeri and Farsi in Tabriz is stable.

The chapter begins by defining family language policy and rationalizing the investigation of family language policy in relation to pressures from the ecology surrounding the home. Azeri parents and children's attitudes and behavior with respect to language(s) in the domain of home are then analyzed. Finally, the participants' attitudes towards educational policies and broadcast media are discussed.

### **7.1 Family language policy**

Family language policy, defined as "explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within the home among family members" (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008, p. 907), is an important area of investigation in language maintenance studies. It has been persuasively argued that the domain of home is the most important domain for language maintenance because it is the site for establishing "the bedrock of language maintenance" (King, et al., 2008, p. 917), i.e. intergenerational transmission of heritage language, culture and values (Fishman, 1991, 2001). Favorable family language policy towards language(s) can determine, and potentially guarantee, their vitality within a community to a great extent. By contrast, negative attitudes may be a prime cause of intergenerational discontinuity of a language (Baker, 2006). As a result, some have argued that "all meaningful language policy is ultimately played out in the home" (Caldas, 2012,

p. 351), and policies can be said to have succeeded if favorable attitudes and perceptions about the use of the dominant language in the home are formed.

The case of Irish illustrates the point very well. Irish has been seriously overwhelmed by English for over one hundred years. Despite Irish being designated as the first national language, and the state's constant intervention in all macro domains such as the education sector, the media, public sphere, etc., healthy intergenerational continuity for Irish is still disrupted and children and parents increasingly learn and use English (Spolsky, 2009). In Lo Bianco's (2012a, p. 518) words, "Ireland represents a case of failure and success, conquering all areas of formal legal recognition but marked by relative neglect of domain [*sic*] normalization." The language contact situation in Ireland indicates that the absence of a favorable family language policy may affect language maintenance efforts. Fishman (1991, 2001) consequently argues that most emphasis should be placed on face-to-face micro-scale interactions in the domain of home and neighborhood, and language policies in macro domains such as education systems, media, etc. should not be taken as a contributing factor to language vitality per se. Such a situation, i.e. attempting to control the language of education, the mass media, workplace, etc. and neglecting the very intimate intergenerational transmission of language, has been likened to "constantly blowing air into a tire that has a puncture" (Fishman, 1991, p. xii). That is, all language maintenance endeavors which do not lead to favorable family language policy in the home are seen to be in vain.

The case of language shift in Ireland and Fishman's argument, however, does not seem to suggest that family language policy in the home and family members' attitudes and practices are not influenced by the outside society. Nor does it seem to necessarily mean that the loss of external macro domains will necessarily result in language shift in the domain of home (Boyd, 2011). Rather, the language shift from Irish to English clearly shows that home is the institution which plays the most significant role in language maintenance, and when a language is not maintained in the home, safeguarding a language in other macro domains may not result in language maintenance. In other words, when stable bilingualism is disrupted in a sense that families favor a dominant language in the home, it is not easy to maintain an ethnic heritage language only through protective policies in the education system, media, etc. Furthermore, the case of Irish illustrates Liddicoat and Baldauf's (2008) point very well; ultimately, it is people at the grass roots level that determine to what extent particular policies have succeeded in achieving their goals. Consequently, examining the dynamics of family language policy in the home in

relation to language policies at the macro level seems to be necessary. Such an inquiry can provide a window into language ideologies and attitudes of family members, reflecting attitudes and values at the societal level (King, et al., 2008).

Investigating language attitudes and ideologies within the family unit is important because home is a domain where language ideologies are both "formed and enacted," and it is within the family unit that "dominant ideologies intersect and compete with local or individual views on language and parenting" (King, et al., 2008, p. 907). Home can, thus, be seen as a "battlefield" (Calvet, 1998) where ideologies compete for attention, and a site which both "records and reflects" multilingualism and language contacts found in multilingual societies. As a result, the behavior and attitudes of the members of families, i.e. children and parents, can function as a "tiny social barometer" which is sensitive to the pressures outside home (Harrison, 2007, p. 8). Studying this barometer is believed to shed light on the extent to which family language policies are influenced by external forces, whether such external policies are contested or endorsed, and which language(s) family language policies are supporting.

## **7.2 Azeri parents' attitudes towards language use in the home**

An attitude questionnaire administered to 150 Azeri parents of young children (see Appendix One), and 50 face-to-face interviews with children (see Appendix Two) are drawn upon here to investigate family language policy among Azeris. The data from the questionnaires was collected through seven-point Likert Scale questions, and then analyzed quantitatively using SPSS software. The questions revolved around Azeri parents' attitudes towards Azeri and Farsi in the home, their attitudes towards educational policies and the media available to them. The questions were designed based on a focus-group interview I had undertaken with six mothers of young children (see chapter three).

Eight questions on the questionnaire addressed Azeri parents' attitudes with respect to Azeri and Farsi use in the home. A factor analysis of those questions yielded two distinct factors. A scaled formed using questions 10, 40, and 41 with the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.66 shows Azeri parents' attitudes towards Azeri in the home. Another scale formed using questions 1, 17, 22, and 30 with the Cronbach's Alpha<sup>14</sup> of 0.83 shows Azeri parents' attitudes towards using Farsi in the home.

Table 7.1 below lists the mean for the questions addressing attitudes towards Farsi in the home. Given that 3.50 is the midpoint on the agreement/disagreement continuum (1

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<sup>14</sup> A Cronbach's Alpha for a group of questions above .70 shows acceptable reliability (see chapter three).

indicating total agreement, and 7 total disagreement), the mean 3.96 indicates that the participants in the study are moderately inclined towards disagreeing with the use of Farsi in the home. They do not have strong views against using Farsi in the home, however. Farsi, as the official language of the state, seems to have gained a foothold in the domain of home in Tabriz. These relatively moderate views about the presence or absence of Farsi in the home among Azeris can be attributed to external influences coming from state-run institutions and domains such as the education system, the media, and so on, which has give Farsi more instrumental value compared to Azeri.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Farsi_at_Home	101	1.00	7.00	3.9624	1.45374
Valid N (listwise)	101				

Table 7.1: The mean for attitudes towards Farsi in the home

Table 7.2 below shows Azeri parents' attitudes towards using Azeri in the home. As shown below, Azeri parents participating in the research do not hold strong views about using Azeri in the home. The mean (3.11) shows the respondents reported relatively moderate attitudes towards using Azeri in the home. Given the role of Azeri in Tabriz, i.e. the ethnic language spoken daily in Tabriz, it is surprising that Azeri parents do not express stronger attachment to Azeri. The results of a paired-samples T test between attitudes towards Azeri ( $M=3.11$ ;  $SD= 1.40$ ) and attitudes towards Farsi ( $M= 3.96$ ;  $SD= 1.45$ ) shows the difference is significant ( $t(100) = 3.20$ ,  $p = .02$ ), meaning that Azeris report stronger attitudes towards using Azeri than Farsi in the home. Yet, such relatively weak attitudes with respect to Azeri use and moderately positive attitudes towards Farsi in the home are likely to affect language use and family language policy in the home resulting in language shift from Azeri to Farsi in the long run.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Azeri_at_Home	107	1.00	7.00	3.1184	1.40324
Valid N (listwise)	107				

Table 7.2: The mean for "attitudes towards Azeri in the home

The following section explores Azeri children's reported linguistic choice when they speak with their father, mother, and siblings. The data analysis provides more evidence regarding the presence of Farsi in the home among Azeris in Tabriz.

### 7.3 Azeri children's linguistic choices in the home

Children's significant role in influencing language practices in the home has been acknowledged in the literature. Because children are sensitive to "the disfavored status of their elders' language" (Harrison, 2007, p. 8), they may choose the more prestigious and dominant language under the influence of the education sector, the media, and the public sphere (Spolsky, 2009). Influenced by language policies outside home as well as family language policies, children, depending on a variety of considerations, "make decisions, conscious or not, as to the language(s) they want to use at home, with their peers and in the public domain" (McCarty, Romero-Little, Warhol, & Zepeda, 2009; Shohamy, 2006, p. 48). Such linguistic choices among children in the home are highly likely to disrupt the intergenerational transmission of weaker languages.

This section explores the dynamics of family language policy among Azeris from the children's perspective. Fifty children were interviewed about what language(s) they use with different members of the family. The reported data collected from the interviews suggests that Azeri is not the only language spoken in the home.

Children's language use at home demonstrates that Azeri is used inside the domain of home as the dominant language between children and their father. Yet, other languages, Farsi being the most dominant one, are also used in the domain of home in Tabriz.

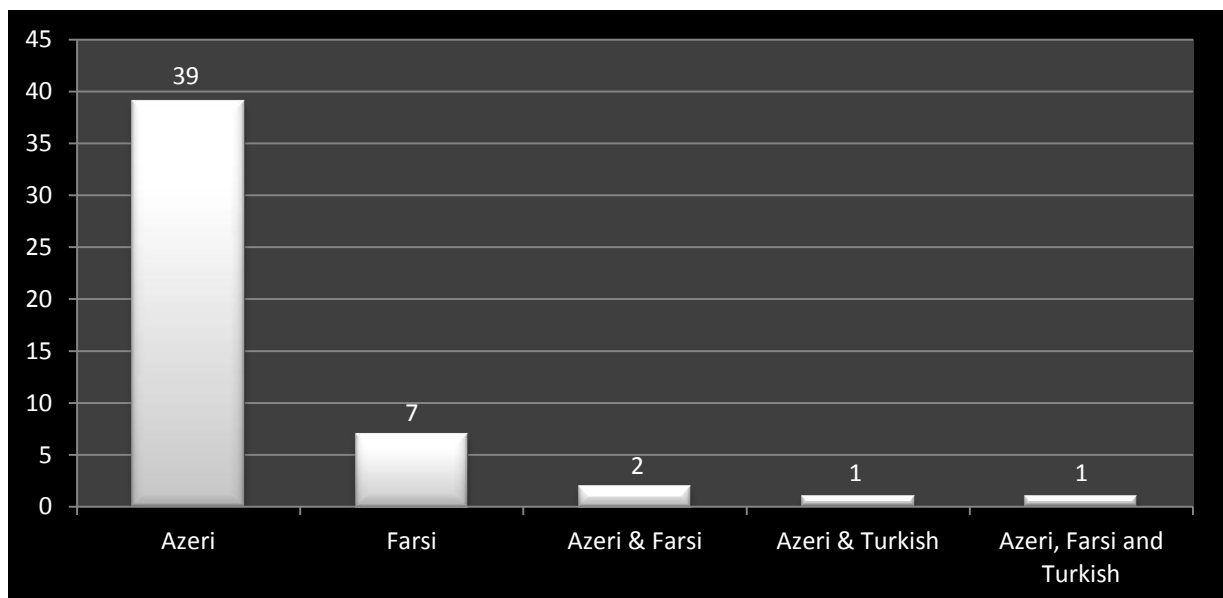


Figure 7.1: Language used with the father at home

As shown in Figure 7.1, Azeri is the dominant language reported in the home between the child and the father. Thirty nine children (78%) report that they use Azeri to interact with their father. Farsi stands second with seven children speaking Farsi at home with their

father. Only two children report using both Azeri and Farsi within the family unit. One child uses Azeri and Turkish, and one (2%) uses Azeri, Farsi and Turkish.

The situation is slightly different when it comes to the female parent, i.e. mother. Thirty three children speak Azeri with their mother at home. Eleven report that they speak Farsi at home when they talk with their mother. Five use both languages and only one child uses the three languages. This slight difference might be due to the impact of gender on language choice (see Figure 7.2). There is a body of research which suggests women tend to choose the dominant language more often than men, and consequently lead in linguistic change (e.g. Aikio, 1992; Cavanaugh, 2006; Gal, 1978; Holmes, 1993; Mukherjee, 2003; Roman, Juhasz, & Miller, 1994; Yu-Hsiu Lee, 2013). Such a choice has been assumed to be because of women's lower social status as well as their sensitivity to the socioeconomic advantages of learning and using the dominant language. The studies argue that language choice and shift does not take place in a vacuum, and thus, cannot be separated from socioeconomic and cultural contextual factors. The strategic choice of a particular language is usually carried out to achieve socioeconomic gains and acquire symbolic capital (Smith-Hefner, 2009).

Aikio (1992) argues that "the belief that use of the majority language can free one from the lower status associated with the minority language may provide sufficient motivation for the switch" (p. 44). The fact that Azeri mothers' interaction with their children tends to be in Farsi, as compared to Father-child interaction, could suggest that women attempt to seek more socioeconomic gain through speaking Farsi not only for themselves, but also for their children. Having realized the transition of their children from an Azeri environment of the home into Farsi-only schools, women might choose to speak Farsi in the home to ease their children's integration into the education system and guarantee higher success and socioeconomic mobility for their children.

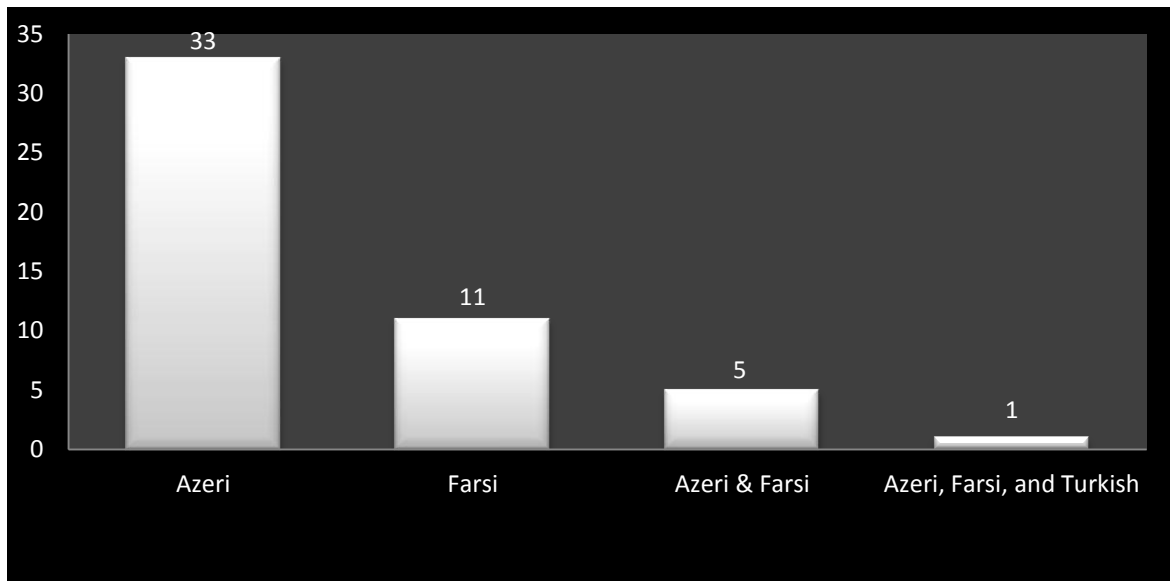


Figure 7.2: Language used with the mother at home

Azeri is also reported as the dominant language used between the siblings at home. Twelve children out of 50 were only children. Twenty four out of the 38 remaining children report they use only Azeri while interacting with their siblings. Farsi, as in the case of parents, stands in the second place with 9 children using it. Azeri and Farsi with three children using it, Turkish with one child using it with the sibling, and Farsi and Turkish with one child using it take the next places. The presence of Farsi is obvious in the home. Although the presence of Farsi in the home might not be strong enough to suggest imminent large-scale language shift from Azeri to Farsi, the analysis could indicate incipient stages of disruption of stable bilingualism in Tabriz.

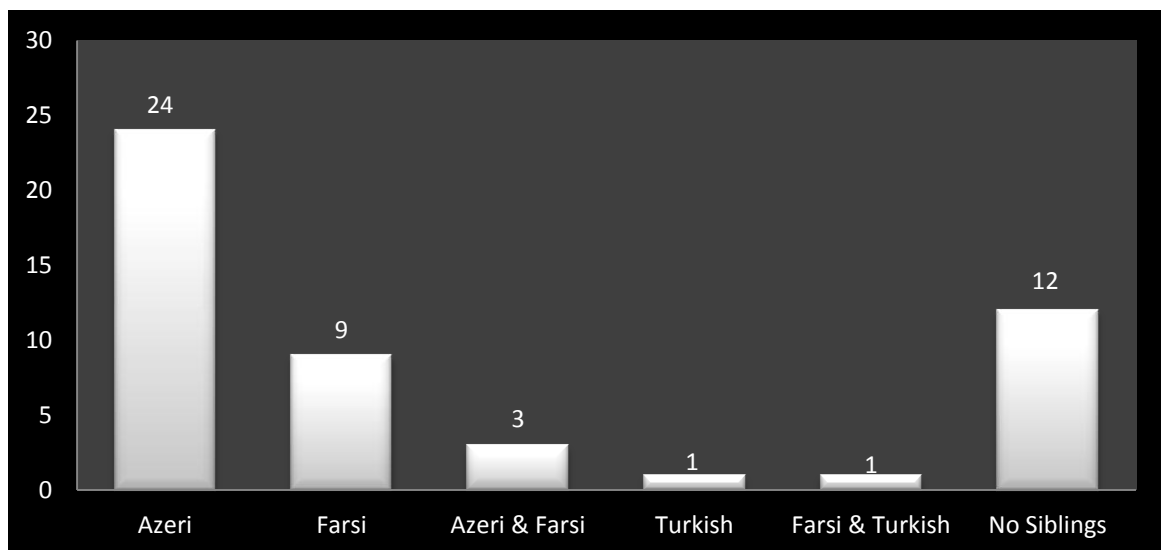


Figure 7.3: Language used with siblings at home

Uncommitted attitudes towards using Azeri in the home revealed through questionnaires from parents on the one hand, and the presence of Farsi in the home making children bilingual as young as four, on the other, could suggest that stable bilingualism in Azeri and Farsi is not the norm. Stable bilingualism, i.e. a situation where domains of language use are functionally separate for each language, is viewed as a key factor assisting with maintaining sociolinguistic pattern of a society (Fishman, 1972b). It has been suggested that if the functional differentiation of languages is disrupted, leading to one language losing its specific domain of use, it is likely that another language may displace it or a new type of functional differentiation of the languages may be arrived at. This is said to take place when the salience of the language erodes for the group (Giles & Johnson, 1981). The analysis of the data from the attitude questionnaires and case studies could be taken as an alarming sign for Azeris suggesting the erosion of the salience of Azeri for Azeris. In other words, home as the last and first resort for language maintenance has been infiltrated by Farsi, threatening healthy intergenerational transmission of Azeri. The presence of Farsi in the domain of home can be seen as a threat rather than an opportunity here given that Farsi is of greater instrumental value and has been institutionalized and legitimized in the macro domains of education, media, public sphere, etc. Early bilingualism in the home could also threaten Azeri because, as the questionnaire data suggested, the parents' attitudes towards using Azeri in the home do not seem to be strong enough to guarantee healthy intergenerational transmission for Azeri in the long term.

## **7.4 Case studies**

Yu (2010) argues that parents' reported language beliefs should not be taken for granted. Rather, language beliefs need to be explored in practice to examine whether they endorse language behavior. Three children were accordingly observed to explore parents and children's (linguistic) behavior and attitudes in the home. Woodside's (2010, p. 1) definition of a case study as "an inquiry that focuses on describing, understanding, predicting, and/or controlling the individual (i.e., process, animal, person, household, organization group, industry, culture, or nationality)" is applied (see also Duff, 2008; Yu, 2010). The three case studies were carried out to "describe" what a typical Azeri family language policy might be like, to "explain" and "understand in depth" why these parents and children behave as they do, and "predict" what might happen to Azeri in the long term. The case studies were chosen using "a friend of a friend approach" (Milroy, 1980). This approach provided prior familiarity and helped establish better rapport with the children.



The data analysis below suggests to what extent findings from attitude questionnaire are consistent with actual practices in the home, while illuminating the influence of these macro domains on families at the grass roots level.

The children observed in this study are given the pseudonyms, Susan, Anna, and Mary. Each case was observed during three days for approximately 2 hours per session (see chapter three). Each case highlights particular pressure from the ecology outside the home on language attitudes and behavior of family members, namely children and their parents.

### **Case One: Susan**

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The first child observed, called "Susan" for the purpose of this study, is a four-year-old girl (born in Tabriz to Azeri parents) who comes from a middle-class Azeri family. Both her parents hold BAs and work outside the home. Despite the fact that the parents' first language is Azeri, because of their level of education, near-native knowledge of Farsi can be assumed for them. According to ethnographic interviews I undertook with her parents, they have spoken Farsi with her since her birth in the hope that she will not have problems at school later on. All relatives, except for her grandparents who cannot speak Farsi, have been requested by the parents to speak Farsi with Susan.

Susan's case clearly illustrates how particular educational policies of states can create and impose particular Discourses, i.e. certain ways of seeing the world (Gee, 2011), on people. Susan's parents' attitudes towards Farsi suggest that they see lack of Farsi knowledge before primary school as a problem. In other words, low or lack of proficiency in Farsi among Azeri children has been Discursively constructed as a 'problem,' which seems to have resulted in viewing learning Farsi as a necessity at an early age in Susan's family. As I argued in chapter four, the implementation of Farsi-only educational policies in Tabriz indoctrinates certain language ideologies. Susan's parents' decision to speak Farsi with her reflects their concern about their child's future at school, and perhaps more generally about her upward socioeconomic mobility. As Spolsky (2011) points out, this is a common trend among minority communities. Parents often introduce the language of school to the domain of home before children begin their formal education in order to "ease their children's integration into school" (Spolsky, 2011, p. 153).

However, because both Susan's parents go to work every day, the child is left with her grandmother. As a result, Susan spends around eleven hours with her grandmother

(from 7am to 6 pm) everyday<sup>15</sup>. Susan's exposure to Azeri from her grandmother and to Farsi from her parents and relatives has resulted in the development of features found in bilingual individuals, e.g. code-switching, at the age of four.

Code-switching or code-mixing, i.e. "an alternation of languages within the same discourse or speech act," is seen as a major process that individuals face when they simultaneously learn two or more languages (Grim, 2008, p. 189). Both intersentential and intrasentential instances of code-switching were observed in Susan's daily speech. It was observed that Susan switched to Farsi when she was addressed in Farsi, and she answered in Azeri when people around her spoke to her in Azeri. It is argued that children's code-switching is similar to that of adults, both being influenced by social, topical, situational, and psychological factors (Bentahila & Davies, 1995; Byers-Heinlein, 2013; Gort, 2012; Grim, 2008). Susan seems to possess this capacity enabling her to switch appropriately to Farsi and Azeri based on different situations.

Intrasentential code-switching was also observed. Susan made use of vocabulary and grammatical structures from both languages in her sentences.

1. میخوام گاریشقا<sup>16</sup> رو نشونت بدم.

*show you the ant I want*

I WANT TO SHOW YOU THE ANT.

2. کردی به میرم

*the garden to I'm going*

I'M GOING TO THE GARDEN.

3. میخوام سو

*I want water*

I WANT WATER.

4. دختر بی ادب بیسی

*is bad impolite girl*

THE IMPOLITE GIRL IS BAD.

5. قار میبارد

*Is falling snow*

SNOW IS FALLING.

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<sup>15</sup> The observation took place at the grandmother's home.

<sup>16</sup> Please note that Azeri and Persian both use Perso-Arabic alphabet, and are written from right to left. Azeri words and their English equivalents are underlined here.

These instances of code-switching illustrate Susan's tendency to use and integrate different elements of Azeri and Farsi. Moreover, she seems to be proficient in listening and comprehending Azeri and Farsi. This can be seen in her reactions while watching Farsi programs when she sometimes comments on a scene. For example, in a cartoon where a little girl was annoying her friends, Susan suddenly said in Farsi: "حالا گرگه میاد میخوردش", "Now the wolf will come and eat her!" In another (rare) case, when she was watching a cartoon with her grandmother, the grandmother made a comment on the cartoon which suggested she had not understood the Farsi. Susan translated the character's words into Azeri and corrected her grandmother.

Stuart-Smith (2006, p. 143) argues that television, despite the ongoing debates about its impact on behavior (see chapter six), may be a contributory factor in language change for "certain individuals under specific circumstances" if they show a vicarious experience with television. Susan's experience with television seems to be vicarious in the sense that she "interacts" with characters she sees in the cartoons. The circumstances for her seem to be suitable as she regularly receives and learns Farsi input from her parents. It could be arguably said that Susan's linguistic repertoire is constantly influenced by television. Given that she views exclusively Farsi channels, her linguistic abilities in Farsi could be predicted to improve as she grows up.

Susan's case shows that her parents' positive attitudes towards Farsi and its role in their child's future have resulted in her exposure to Farsi since she was born. Such positive attitudes are likely to be formed by expectations that macro domains and institutions, or by what Fishman's (2006) calls "the reward system," create and foster in the society. As discussed in chapter four, education is delivered exclusively in Farsi in Iran. One side-effect of such policies for Azeri families seems to be that Azeri parents become concerned about their children's low proficiency in Farsi, and consequently, their social and economic upward mobility. Such an external push factor could encourage Azeri families to set family language policies which favor Farsi over Azeri in the home. As Pakir (2003) argues about her findings, "the desired outcome of a centralized education system was achieved through the population's pragmatic choices" (p. 276). Susan's parents' decision to speak Farsi with her in the home reflects this issue.

## Case Two: Anna

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The second child, "Anna," can be compared and contrasted with Susan. Anna is also four. However, Anna's mother is a homemaker. She holds an associate degree. Although her mother sometimes speaks Farsi with her, the majority of interactions are in Azeri. She sometimes reads Farsi material to Anna, and tells her stories in Farsi. Unlike Susan whose parents were both Azeri-speakers, Anna's father is originally from Tehran. He is a university student and self-employed. Although his first language is Farsi, he knows and uses Azeri in the home. Anna's father speaks Azeri with her and she answers in Azeri. Azeri seems to be particularly used to express feelings and emotions, such as reprimanding the child. In informal conversations I had with the mother, I realized that she spoke Azeri because she believed Azeri was hard and children could not learn it if they did not speak it in the home. The mother also noted that she herself did not know Azeri stories or songs. She also maintained that Farsi could be learned through exposure to Farsi on television. As a result, Anna was exposed to Farsi channels on a regular basis.

The Discourse of 'learning Farsi at an early age being a necessity' for children seems to have influenced Anna's parents to a lesser degree compared to Susan's parents. In spite of the fact that both parents have decided to speak Azeri with Anna, she is also able to speak Farsi. Her proficiency in Farsi seems to come from mainly two sources, i.e. television and her grandfather. In contrast to Susan's grandmother who was the main source for Susan's linguistic competence in Azeri, Anna's grandfather and perhaps other relatives from Tehran seem to be a reason for Anna's ability to speak Farsi. As reported by the mother, they did not want Anna to learn and speak Farsi as another home language. However, because her grandfather is from Tehran and speaks Farsi with Anna whenever they meet at a party or on the phone, she started learning Farsi from him as well as from television and cartoons as well. This has resulted in Anna's competence to use both languages at the age of four.

Like Susan, code-switching was also noted in Anna's daily speech. At a party, depending on her interlocutor, situational code-switching was observed in a sense that if a child spoke Farsi with her, she answered back in Farsi successfully. And, if she was addressed in Azeri, she was competent to converse in Azeri. As Gort (2012) argues, research findings show that young bilinguals use their developing languages appropriately with different interlocutors to achieve a wide variety of stylistic purposes and situational

demands. This phenomenon was also observed when Anna used Farsi when she wanted to ask for something or when she sought her parents' affection.

These case studies highlight the role of grandparents and intermarriages in language maintenance/shift (see Sofu, 2009). Susan and Anna's cases show how grandparents can play a role in children's linguistic repertoire formation. Without her grandparents' presence, Susan would have been put into a kindergarten while her parents are out. As a result, she would have been exposed to even more Farsi given that the medium of instruction in kindergartens is Farsi (see chapter 4). By contrast, intermarriage between Anna's mother, who is Azeri, and her father, who is a Farsi-speaker, resulting in the communication between Anna and her grandfather has encouraged her to learn Farsi at a very young age although her parents may not want her to learn and use Farsi at that age.

Susan's case also illustrates another important point. Susan's grandparents' low proficiency in Farsi compared to her own proficiency in Farsi at a very young age also suggests a change in linguistic behavior of Azeris. A comparison between Susan's grandparents' low or lack of proficiency in Farsi (monolingualism in Azeri) and the younger generation's early bilingualism in Azeri and Farsi indicates a linguistic change in Tabriz. This shift in linguistic behavior in the current generation could suggest that language attrition might occur in the long run as Azeri is increasingly overwhelmed in different domains (see chapter four, five, and six).

### **Case Three: Mary**

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The third child, here called "Mary," is six. Mary's mother is a homemaker. She has finished high school and did not continue her studies at university level. She speaks Azeri with her daughter most of the time. Mary's father is a bank clerk. He holds a BA degree. He also speaks Azeri with his daughter. The majority of oral communication in the family is conducted in Azeri. However, reading and writing, if any, is done in Farsi.

There is a big difference between Mary and the previous cases discussed above. Because Mary is six years old and she is expected to begin primary school the following year, she attends preschool (kindergarten) where the main language is Farsi, as she reported. This means that she is regularly exposed to Farsi every day. She also goes to an English class. She is exposed to television programs around 2 hours a day. She exclusively watches Farsi programs on television.

Although the main language in the home is Azeri, Mary uses Farsi words in her Azeri sentences. The Farsi equivalent for the basic lexical item "apple," for example,

rather than the Azeri word, seems to be her first choice as she used it several times. She sometimes uses full Farsi sentences as well. For example, when she went to answer the door, she used *کیه؟* in Farsi, meaning "who is it?" and would on occasions repeat some Farsi sentences from cartoons or movies. Having been exposed to both Azeri and Farsi, she can hold conversations in both languages quite well.

Media and the education system seem to play a part in the formation of Mary's linguistic repertoire. Children repeating sentences they hear on different shows on television and/or in classroom can be interpreted as a sign of the impact of broadcasting media and the education system on children. Webb (2011), for example, argues that television is a "valuable source for language learning" as it provides "authentic aural input." He further writes that television viewing can result in incidental learning of linguistic features. Given that Mary has been exposed to Azeri from her parents since birth, her Farsi sentences and code-switching can be taken as the influence of the media and/or education system on her in the domain of home. In other words, Mary's case indicates how Farsi from the ecology outside the home formed by language policies in the macro domains can enter home. Whether or not parents speak Farsi with their children, children learn Farsi when, and most of the time before, they enter pre-schools. The case studies explored here as well as the Farsi-only educational policies discussed in chapter four suggest that by the age of seven when children start primary school, most children typically become competent speakers of Farsi. Cases like Mary's clearly demonstrate how Farsi-only education can influence the linguistic repertoire of Azeri children leading to the loss of items of lexicon and idioms. Such a loss of lexicon and idioms can be taken as a marker of language shift from Azeri to Farsi although it seems to be at an incipient stage at the moment (Schmid, 2011).

The brief, but yet informative, case studies presented above aim to illuminate the dynamics of family language policy in Tabriz. Despite the differences observed, there is a common thread in all the cases explored. That is, Azeri and Farsi are present in the domain of home in Tabriz. The presence of Farsi in the home seems to be a result of either parents' conscious decision-making, primarily affected by pragmatic considerations, or the pressures which have been created and imposed through macro domains such as the education system, media, public sphere, etc. Language dynamics, as Edwards (2010, p. 40) notes, reflect "pragmatic desires for social mobility and an improved standard of living." In other words, the reasons why some languages are not transmitted to the next generation are related to "assessments of the likely utility of competing varieties" (Edwards, 2010, p. 40).

As argued in chapter two, the implementation of language policies in these domains create and disseminate particular ways of seeing languages and their value and usefulness. The findings from these brief case studies suggest that a desire for educational and socioeconomic mobility is associated with learning and knowing Farsi. Farsi either finds its way into the domain of home through the media and/or intermarriages, etc., or parents under outside pressures decide to speak Farsi in the home. There is a possibility that, in line with Grin and Korth's (2005) argument about the presence of English in Switzerland, the presence of Farsi in the home turns into the "first" language of the home, and "first" might mean "main," and that "main" will mean "only" in the long run. It is also likely that the excessive presence of Farsi in the social and educational domains may override Azeri's domains, and functions, undermining its vitality. The disruption of stable bilingualism can ultimately lead to language shift and language loss (Fishman, 1972b).

The two sets of data, data from the attitude questionnaire and case studies suggest two important points about the dynamics of family language policies. Firstly, Farsi has entered the ecology of the home domain in many families in Tabriz through one means or another. Secondly, the presence of Farsi in the home seems to be associated with pressures from the ecology surrounding the home, particularly concerns that the education system create and expect families to take measures. To shed more light on the link between the domain of home and the education system as well as the media, Azeri parents' attitude regarding the educational policies and broadcast media are explored in the next section. This can provide more evidence for current family language policies among the participating Azeris.

## **7.5 Azeris' attitudes towards educational policies**

Chapter four examined the educational policies in pre-schools in Tabriz as well as the three relevant Articles in the Constitution. As mentioned in chapter four, Farsi-only educational policies along with a higher perceived instrumental value of Farsi in the country, and the absence of Azeri in the education sector are the three main factors which seem to have led to kindergartens' authorities and teachers' positive attitudes towards Farsi, and uncommitted attitudes and behavior with respect to Azeri education. As a result, preschool authorities make sure that Azeri children know Farsi before they enter primary schools. They also suggest parents speak Farsi with children at home after the age of three.

This section examines the attitudes of policy consumers, i.e. Azeris in general, with respect to possible future Azeri education in schools in Tabriz both as a subject and a

medium of instruction. The analysis of the attitudes of policy consumers can (indirectly) show to what extent, if at all, current educational policies are endorsed or contested by Azeris.

Ten of 41 questions in the attitude questionnaire described above were designed to investigate Azeri parents' attitudes towards teaching Azeri as a subject as well as using Azeri as a medium of instruction in schools in Tabriz. A factor analysis showed that two questions, namely questions 12 and 35 (see Appendix 1), had a negative correlation with other questions. They were consequently removed from the final analysis. The Chronbach's Alpha for the remaining eight questions was calculated at 0.90 showing the high reliability of these questions. The eight questions addressing Azeri education formed a scale which was labeled as 'attitudes towards Azeri education.' A number between one and seven, one being Strongly Agree and seven being Strongly Disagree, respectively, shows to what extent the participants agree/disagree with the presence of Azeri in schools.

The primary analysis of the data revealed that Azeri parents' attitudes about the idea of introducing Azeri into the school system in Tabriz were neither strongly positive nor negative. The mean 3.47 (see table 7.3) suggests that Azeri parents seem to be irresolute with respect to having Azeri in the education system. Given the position and value of Azeri and Farsi for Azeri people, Azeri parents participating in the research seem not to be able to make a firm decision as to whether to support Azeri education or not.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
School_Attitudes MEAN	110	3.4750	.56585	.520	.230	.665	.457
Valid N (listwise)	110						

Table 7.3: Attitudes towards Azeri education

The analysis of some of the questions separately, however, sheds more light on the issue, revealing latent attitudes. Examining two sets of questions addressing the presence of Azeri as a subject and a medium of instruction in schools suggests that the respondents seem to support the presence of Azeri in the education system as a subject much more strongly than Azeri as a medium of instruction. Questions number two and twenty three addressed the issue of Azeri as a subject in the education system:



2) I wish there were schools which had language courses on Azeri.

Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frequency	39	26	19	10	4	5	4
Valid percent	36.4	24.3	17.8	9.3	3.7	4.7	3.7

Table 7.4: Results for question number 2

23) I would send my child to a school where there was a course on Azeri.

Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frequency	25	11	14	30	9	11	6
Valid percent	23.6	10.4	13.2	28.3	8.5	10.7	5.7

Table 7.5: Results for question number 23

As the tables 7.4 and 7.5 demonstrate, answers one, two and three equivalent to Strongly Agree, Agree, and Somewhat Agree, score higher in total than questions five, six and seven indicating that the majority of the participants agree with having Azeri as a course in schools. It is worth noting, however, that, as comparing Table 7.4 and 7.5 results demonstrates, not all the 78% of the people agreeing with having a course on Azeri may send their children to such schools. Table 7.5 clearly shows that only 46% reported they would send their children to schools where there was a course on Azeri. Moreover, 28% checked the midpoint, suggesting ambivalence towards the issue of having schools where Azeri were taught as a subject.

By contrast, the analysis of question 18 which addresses the issue of using Azeri as a medium of instruction in schools indicates that fifty percent of parents would ideally like to have Azeri as a medium of instruction in schools.

18) I wish there were schools where all subjects were taught in Azeri.

Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frequency	24	14	16	17	13	16	6
Valid percent	22.6	13.2	15.1	16.0	12.3	15.1	5.7

Table 7.6: Results for question number 18

The table 7.6 shows that nearly half of the participating parents wish there were schools where the children could study all subjects in Azeri. They wish Azeri was able to be used as a medium of instruction. However, investigation of the behavioral aspect of attitudes (see chapter three), data from question 33 in particular, suggests that the parents' wish is not likely to ever materialize as their responses indicate they would still be unwilling to send their children to Azeri-medium schools. As the table 7.7 shows, nearly sixty percent of the participants disagree with sending their children to Azeri-medium schools.

33) I would send my child to a school where they taught all subjects in Azeri.

Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frequency	17	5	5	12	15	39	13
Valid percent	16.0	4.7	4.7	11.3	14.2	36.8	12.3

Table 7.7: Results for question number 33

The analysis of the questions addressing Azeri education as a subject and as a medium of instruction, respectively, indicates that Azeri parents participating in the research support having a course on Azeri more strongly than having Azeri as the medium of instruction. One explanation for such attitudes may be the parents' concern about their children's future. We could assume that the respondents seem to believe that studying all subjects in Azeri could lower their children's proficiency in Farsi which could in return slows down the upward social and economic mobility. On the flipside, the parents are positive about being able to read and write in Azeri although, as discussed above, they may not send their children to Azeri-medium schools. The table 7.8 illustrates the presence of such attitudes among Azeris. It clearly shows that eighty six percent of the participants agreed that 'it would be great if Azeri people could read and write.'

29) It would be great if Azeri people could read and write Azeri.

Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frequency	43	35	15	9	2	1	2
Valid percent	40.2	32.7	14.0	8.4	1.9	.9	1.9

Table 7.8: Results for question number 29

Azeri parents' preference for using Farsi as a medium of instruction, and potentially having Azeri as a course, may also come from naive and wishful thinking that Azeri, as their mother tongue, will be spoken forever. A question was designed to explore what Azeri parents think about the future of Azeri in Tabriz. They were asked to answer how long they predict Azeri would be spoken in Tabriz, and why. They were asked to choose one of the following: 50-100 years, 100-200 years, more than 200 years, and forever. Eighty four percent of the parents believed that Azeri would be used in Tabriz 'forever.' The other participants (16%) believed that Azeri would disappear sooner or later. Two main reasons stated by the participants to support their ideas were its status as a mother tongue and language of tradition. They stated that because Azeri is their mother tongue, it will be passed on to the next generation 'in any case,' apparently without being aware of the likely influence of their own attitudes and behavior. Sallabank's (2012) research into processes of

language loss shows that speakers do not necessarily realize that if they do not speak a language with their children, the children will not learn it. It is perhaps why Calvet (1998) criticizes using the term 'mother tongue' as it implies that the language children learn is the language they "inherit" from their mother, and in some cases from their father. The term connotes and assumes an automatic maintenance of mother tongues. The majority of Azeri parents taking part in the research seem to take it for granted that Azeri, as a 'mother tongue', will be spoken in the city for ever (see also Spolsky, 2004, p. 5).

By contrast, the second group believing in Azeri language attrition and potential death (16%) mentioned reasons such as the impact of the education system and the media resulting in lexical and structural attrition. They stated that Azeri was losing many items of its lexicon as well as idioms and structures to Farsi because it was overwhelmed in the domains of education and media (see chapters four and six).

In sum, the analysis of parents' attitudes regarding educational policies suggests that most endorse the current policy, i.e. having Farsi as the only medium of instruction. Although the majority of those responding would ideally like to be able to read and write in Azeri, they do not seem to be interested in having Azeri as a medium of instruction in the education system.

As discussed in chapter six, Sahand TV, established, owned, and funded by the government for Azeris, broadcasts programs in Azeri and Farsi. I argued that Sahand TV's institutional incompleteness is highly likely to result in the functional incompleteness of Azeri in Tabriz; i.e. Azeris may be influenced by Discourses disseminated through this channel. The case studies presented earlier in the chapter showed that children nearly exclusively watch the Farsi channel. The following section examines Azeris' attitudes and behavior with respect to the broadcasting media.

## **7.6 Azeri children's attitudes and behavior towards television channels**

I presented data about Sahand TV, the local channel for Azeris in Tabriz, in the previous chapter. As I argued, the analysis of the type of programs broadcast on Sahand TV, and examining the language in which such programs are broadcast, demonstrated two points. Firstly, Azeri and Farsi enjoy an equal share of airtime on this channel. Secondly, Farsi shows broadcast on Sahand TV, as demonstrated in chapter six, are aimed at Azeri children and youth, implying the promulgation of a particular Discourse which produces learning and using Farsi.

Liddicoat and Baldauf (2008) argue that policies do not succeed in achieving their goals without people's engagement. The analysis of data about grass-roots attitudes and behavior thus seems worthwhile. This section examines Azeris' reported attitudes and behavior with respect to the broadcasting media available to them. Azeri children's attitudes and behavior are explored here first because children are active users of television and able to learn, e.g. vocabulary, from television (Kirkorian, Wartella, & Anderson, 2008; Kunkel, 1998; Madsen, 1973). As explored in the case studies, their attitudes and behavior with respect to viewing television may consequently have an impact on language maintenance or shift (e.g. Hourigan, 2007).

One part of the questions in the 50 interviews with children were specifically designed to learn about Azeri children's attitudes towards different languages in which programs were aired on different channels, and the possible reasons for such attitudes (see Appendix Two). One question designed to explore the young Azeri children's attitudes towards programs broadcast in different languages was which cartoon they would choose if they had the option to choose that cartoon in Azeri, Farsi or Turkish. Turkish was included in the question as I found out during the pilot study that Azeri families also watch Turkish satellite channels broadcast from Turkey (see chapter three for details). Moreover, some of the children reported they knew how to speak Turkish when they were asked how many languages they knew. This question was designed to indirectly examine the children's attitudes towards languages. As the data below shows, such attitudes towards the three languages present on the media tend to favor dominant languages such as Farsi and Turkish.

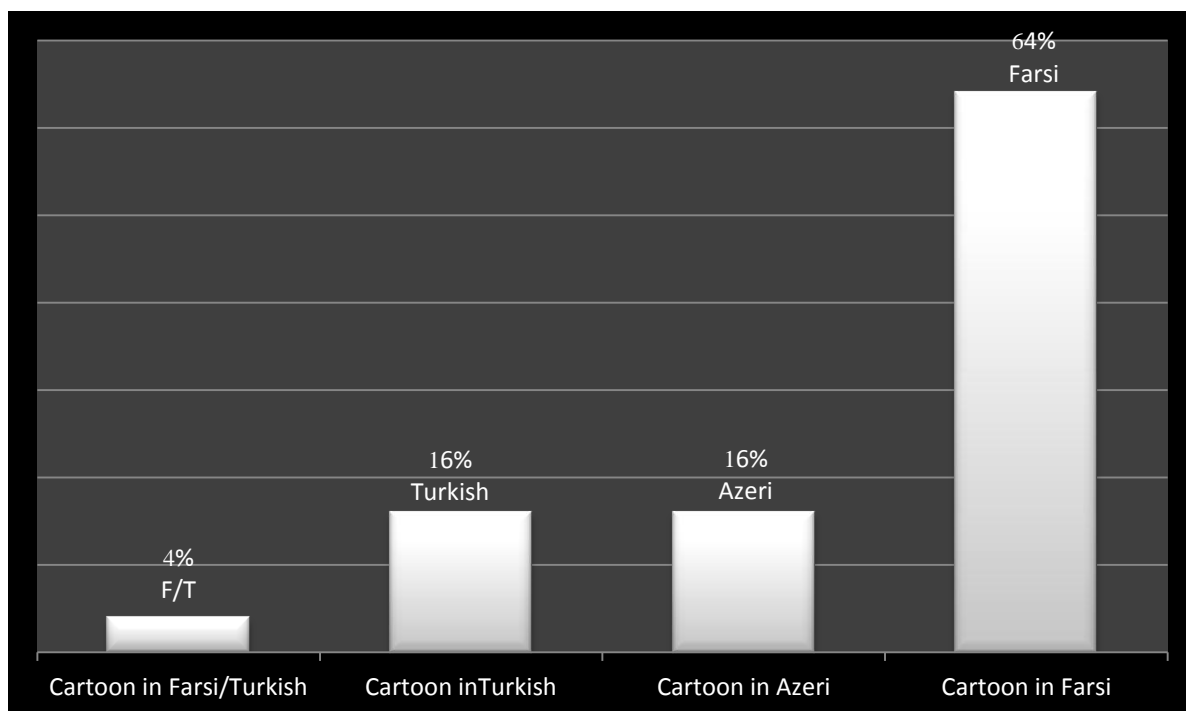


Figure 7.4: Azeri children's preference to watch cartoons in different languages

As Figure 7.4 clearly demonstrates, 64% of Azeri children reported they preferred to watch cartoons in Farsi, the official language of the country whereas only 16% of the participants preferred Azeri and Turkish. Interestingly, two of the children favored either Farsi or Turkish cartoons, but not Azeri ones, suggesting that Azeri has no place in the media for two of the children interviewed in this study.

A direct question was also posed to children with respect to their actual behavior towards viewing Sahand TV. Figure 7.5 clearly shows that only nine out of 50 children reported they watched Sahand TV on a regular basis. 21 of the children said they did not watch Sahand TV at all, and 20 of the participants reported they watched Sahand TV only a little. It is worth noting that watching Sahand TV would not necessarily mean watching Azeri programs and becoming exposed to Azeri given that nearly half of the programs on Sahand TV are aired in Farsi, especially children's programs (as mentioned in chapter six).

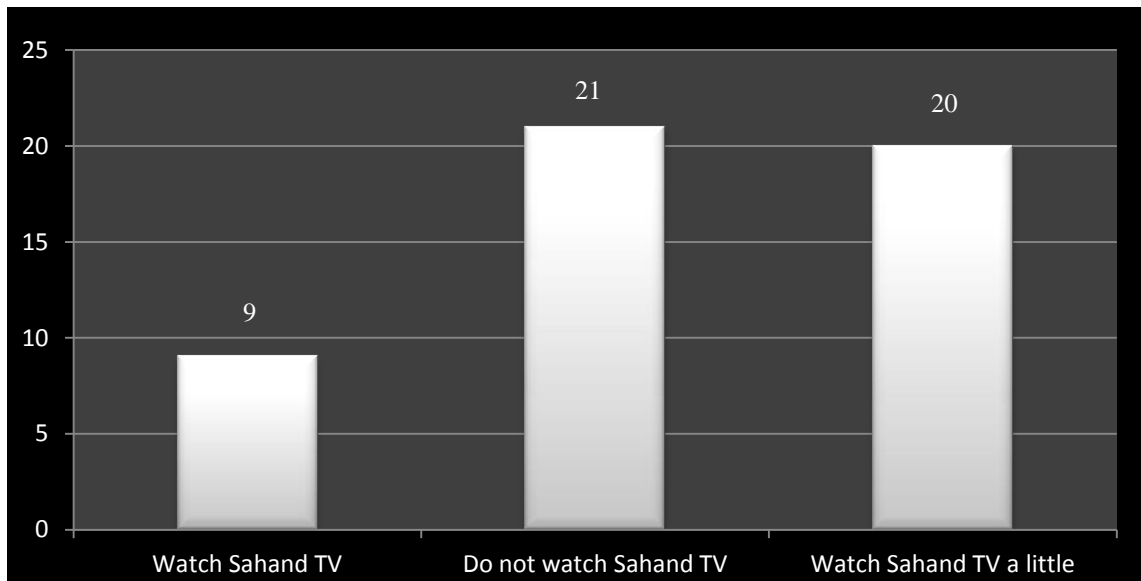


Figure 7.5: The number of children watching Sahand TV (in number)

To corroborate the data from children's interview, parents were also asked to report on their children's behavior towards different channels in the questionnaire and to state which channel(s) their child watched most often. The following data (see Figure 7.6) provide useful information with respect to the children's reported behavior according to the participating parents. In other words, the data below show how their positive attitudes towards Farsi and Turkish, as suggested above in the case of cartoon preference, were actually realized in their viewing behavior as reported by their parents. The parents' responses correspond to the children's reports on their attitudes and behavior with respect to different channels and their respective language.

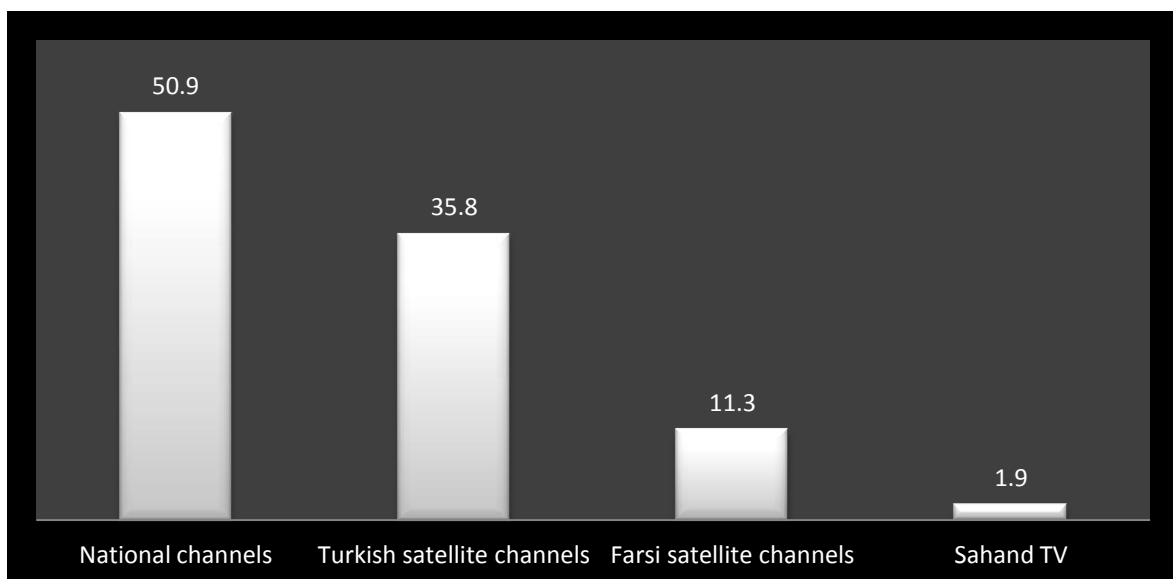


Figure 7.6: Channels children watch most often (in percentage)

Three points can be made about the data presented above. Firstly, as Browne (2007) notes, many minority media offer few or no engaging programs for children and teenagers to encourage them to use the language. Sahand TV does not seem to be an exception. Farsi seems to have become the main and default language choice for watching television for Azeri children. This attitude is very likely due to the children's exposure to high-quality Farsi programs on television, and perhaps the impact of the Farsi-only education sector. The children interviewed mentioned various reasons for their lower interest in Sahand TV and Azeri programs, and positive attitudes towards Farsi and Farsi programs. They mentioned reasons such as a weaker ability to understand Azeri, being more accustomed to Farsi, liking the way Farsi is spoken, wanting to learn more Farsi, Farsi being a beautiful language, Farsi showing a higher class of the speaker, and so on, to justify their preference for Farsi. Such positive attitudes are highly likely to be formed under the influence of the education system, media, linguistic landscapes and other macro domains, or in Spolsky's (2009) words by the ecology outside home. There is a real danger, as Bell (2010) argues, that exposure on a daily basis to media may implicitly signal the death or survival of a language as full vital language.

Secondly, the presence of Turkish in the children's repertoire and their positive attitudes towards Turkish are of great interest. The main reason mentioned by children for their preference for Turkish channels was the better quality of programs, in this case the children's programs, broadcast on Turkish satellite channels. The children found Turkish channels' shows far more appealing than those of Sahand TV. Labelling some of the Iranian and Sahand TV's children's programs as "silly," a seven-year-old boy, for instance, enthusiastically stated that those programs compared to Turkish shows are meaningless and not worth their while to watch. Other children mentioned reasons such as having always watched Turkish programs, being used to Turkish programs, and knowing Turkish better for their preference for Turkish shows.

The third point about the data presented above is the low level of positive attitudes towards Azeri among Azeri children. Producing high-quality programs, Farsi and Turkish shows have replaced Azeri ones. This appears to be one of the reasons for children's weaker preference for Azeri and Azeri cartoons. The young children participating in the interviews also mentioned that Azeri is a hard language in their opinion and that they cannot understand standard Azeri (used on the news at 11:00 pm). Having a weaker preference for the Azeri channel also seems to be the case for Azeri people, in general. The data below show the same phenomenon for parents as well. Azeri parents' attitudes and

behavior regarding television viewing is investigated. Interestingly, the analysis corroborates the data collected from children although the participating children and parents were not necessarily related.

### **7.7 Azeri parents' attitudes and behavior towards television channels**

To investigate the parents' attitudes towards Sahand TV and Farsi channels, six Likert scale questions were designed. A factor analysis demonstrated two distinct underlying factors, labelled as 'attitudes towards Sahand TV,' and 'attitudes towards Farsi channels.' To increase the reliability index (Cronbach's Alpha) from .428 to .672<sup>17</sup>, question number 28 because of a negative correlation was removed from the analysis. The means (M) for attitudes towards Sahand TV and Farsi channels were respectively calculated at 3.97 and 3.64, on a Likert scale of 1 to 7. The data show Azeri parents' relatively negative attitudes towards Sahand TV compared to Farsi channels.

A paired-samples T test was conducted to compare the attitudes towards Sahand TV and Farsi channels, to determine if the difference between the two factors is significant. There was a significant difference in the scores for attitudes towards Sahand TV ( $M=3.97$ ,  $SD=1.57$ ) and attitudes towards Farsi channels ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=.79$ ), conditions;  $t(103) = 2.17$ ,  $p = .032$ . This provides evidence that Azeri parents hold negative attitudes towards Sahand TV compared with Farsi channels. In other words, they prefer Farsi channels to Sahand TV.

Figure 7.7 also provides more evidence reinforcing the view that the participants do not watch Sahand TV as much as they watch other national channels broadcast in Farsi and/or Turkish satellite channels. 49.1 % of the participants reported that they most often watched national Farsi channels. Turkish shows formed the second commonly-watched programs among Azeris in Tabriz with 33% of the participants watching those programs. 13.2% of the respondents reported they watch Farsi satellite channels which are broadcast from countries outside Iran. Only 4.7% of the parents said they watched Sahand TV.

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<sup>17</sup> A Cronbach's Alpha for a group of questions lower than .60 shows low (unacceptable) reliability.



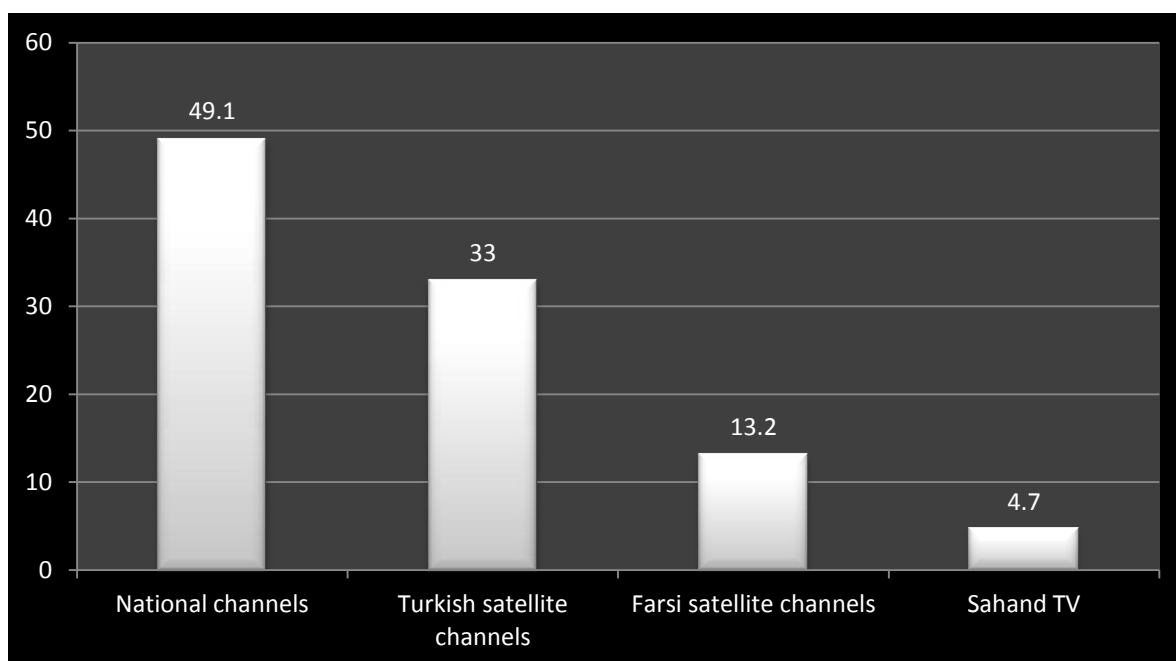


Figure 7.7: Channels parents watch most often (in percentage)

Considering the data above, it can be arguably claimed that Sahand TV has lost the battle to its Farsi and Turkish competitors in attracting viewers. In other words, Azeris do not demonstrate a preference for Sahand TV because it is not "institutionally complete and qualitatively competitive" (Moring, 2007, p. 29). A low level of institutional completeness, i.e. the inability to produce high-quality and attractive programs for people, especially children and teenagers in the minority language (see Cheval, 1992, p. 193), may lead to negative results increasing "the tendency towards a complementary use of media in the minority language, lowering the level of functional completeness of these media" (Moring, 2007, p. 26). As concluded in chapter six, Sahand TV as one of the main institutional supports seems to be only a symbolic gesture by the government for showing their support and care for Azeri. This can be said to be a characteristic of all minority channels which are "for" minorities rather than "by" minorities (Caspi & Elias, 2011).

The analyses presented on the educational policies, broadcast media and linguistic landscapes in Tabriz, in chapter four, five, and six, respectively, as well as the Azeris' responses regarding language policies on those domains clearly demonstrate that Azeri does not enjoy much institutional support from the central government. Azeri is not supported in the education sector resulting in a decrease in Azeris' literacy rate in Azeri (see chapter 5). Azeri is not present in written domains such as the linguistic landscape of the city despite the fact that it has been historically a written language for centuries and there is a rich literature in libraries. Azeri does not receive much support even as an oral language. The way Sahand TV functions has led to Azeris turning to Farsi and Turkish

channels. Considering such circumstances, it can be said that Azeri has lost its hold on some of the most important formal domains and institutions.

## **7.8 Discussion**

Empirical research in multilingual settings demonstrates that the domain of home and interactions among family members do not take place in a vacuum, but rather is influenced by ecology outside home. Family language policy is said to be under constant influence by the pressures created mainly by external macro domains such as education systems and the media (broadcasting media in particular), as well as children's relay role between home and outside domains (e.g. McCarty, et al., 2009; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2009). Calvet (1998), for instance, reports the findings of a study on the Wolof language in Senegal, clearly displaying the impact of the outside world on the decisions made inside the home by family members. The enquiry showed that Wolof, a dominant language in society, was spoken as a first language in the home more by children whose parents did not speak it as a first language. Based on the results, the researchers concluded that "It is not, therefore, the family that has most influence on pupils, but the milieu." They call such a phenomenon "a case of social assimilation" (Calvet, 1998, p. 68). Spolsky (2009) similarly writes that although the domain of family like other domains has its own policy, not all features within the home are managed internally. Rather, language management in the family is only partly under the control of family members. The family language policy is influenced by "the sociolinguistic ecology inside and outside the home and by the parents' beliefs about the best strategy" (Spolsky, 2009, p. 18). Pakir's (2003) analysis also indicates that parents as the "invisible planners," recognize the advantages of the dominant language for their children, e.g. enhanced employability and upward social mobility. They consequently endorse macro policies in other domains such as education systems in favor of the dominant language, usually resulting in their choice of the dominant language to speak with their children. Some have taken such a stance on the home-society relation even further and maintained that family language policy is not often "consciously planned" but rather has been "predetermined by history and circumstances beyond the family's control" (Caldas, 2012, p. 351; Lane, 2010).

The analysis of Azeri children and parents' attitudes towards language policies in the education system and broadcast media, and the examination of the dynamics of family language policy in the home provided insightful findings. Firstly, Azeri parents participating in the research reported moderate attitudes towards potential presence of

Azeri in the education system. Although the majority of the participants would like to be able to read and write in their ethnic language, i.e. Azeri, they do seem to not to favor Azeri-medium schools. Endorsing Farsi-only educational policies can be a contributing factor to encourage parents to introduce Farsi in the home before school to ease their children's integration into the mainstream education system. As the three case studies suggested, Farsi has been Discursively constructed as a necessity for Azeri children, motivating parents to speak Farsi with children before primary school begins.

Secondly, the participating Azeri children and parents' attitudes and behavior revealed that Sahand TV has not been very successful in attracting a strong audience. As a result of Sahand TV not being qualitatively competitive (Moring, 2007), the participants reported that they watched other national channels in Farsi and/or Turkish channels brought to them through satellite. Turkey, as a regional power, has increasingly become integrated with the West through membership in organizations such as NATO, the Council of Europe, and the G-20 major economies. Given its great geostrategic and geopolitical importance, e.g. being at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, it is seen as a country with a significant economic, cultural, and political potential (Bechev, 2011). Offering attractive job opportunities, especially in the form of trade and business, Turkey has become a gateway to the world of modernity and success, especially for the people with the potential to learn Turkish. One possible explanation for Azeris' interest in Turkish could therefore be the socioeconomic potential Turkey has to offer. The economic gain one can receive through learning Turkish on the one hand, such as discounts in university fees for those who know Turkish, and the mutual intelligibility of the two languages of Azeri and Turkish on the other (Boeschoten, 1998), seem to have affected parents and children's attitudes and preferences towards Turkish, encouraging people to watch Turkish television programs. Having recognized this potential, Azeris seem to be keen to learn Turkish in order to be able to take this opportunity. They apparently see Turkish in addition to Farsi as a tool for upward social mobility.

A second possible explanation for Azeris' interest in Farsi and Turkish channels could be their identification with Iranian and broader Turkic identity. Association with the national Iranian identity and identification with the larger Turkic community seem to have attracted Azeris to viewing Farsi and Turkish channels. Farsi channels and Farsi programs on Sahand TV, as I argued in chapter six, may exist to amplify the national Iranian identity (for the role of state-governed media, see Isaacs-Martin, 2008), while one goal of Turkish satellite channels might be to bring all Turks together, in line with pan-Turkic movement,

by imposing a larger Turkic identity across the borders (Poulton, 1999). Although a typical Azeri may identify him/herself equally with Azeri and Iranian identity, there might exist some who believe in and identify him/herself only with either national and Iranian identity or broader Turkic identity, denying his/her local Azeri identity (cf. e.g. Hawes & Mirvahedi, 2013; Paul, 1999; Tavakoli-Targhi, 2009). The issue of regional identity in Azerbaijan has been a thorny historical issue (Daniel, 2001, p. 7). More in-depth research is required to investigate what portion of, and to what extent, Azeris identify themselves as Azeri and/or Turks, and/or Iranian.

Owing to the "transnational and frontier-crossing" nature of satellite channels, governments cannot exercise their control over the new media (Collins, 2002; Debate, 2000; Sakr, 1999). Due to its low-quality programs, which can be clearly inferred by its failure to attract a noticeable audience, and the availability of satellite channels, Turkish channels in particular, Sahand TV has failed to attract a strong audience. The examination of the reported behavior with respect to viewing broadcast media in Tabriz has revealed the existence of a tendency towards Turkish channels, and perhaps Turkish identity among Azeris.

In sum, the analysis of family language policy in the home, in the form of attitudes towards languages and linguistic behavior, illuminated that stable bilingualism between Azeri and Farsi has started to fade. The responding parents reported only moderately positive attitudes towards using Azeri in the home. Moreover, they did not report strong negative attitudes towards Farsi in the home. As the case studies illustrated, Farsi is in fact present in Azeris' houses through the influence of broadcast media, the education system, and intermarriages. Kindergarten or primary school students play a significant role in this process. As Spolsky (2009) argues, parents lose control over family language policy to a great extent as soon as the domain of home opens to the outside pressures of school, peers, etc. As Fishman (1974b) eloquently writes

Language planning provides populations with a new name, with a new mission - and, as a result, with the drive and dignity that makes new schools, new factories, new homes, and new diets not only acceptable but also necessary goals to work for and fight for. It is not important that the variety being produced is increasingly unlike anyone's real mother tongue or grandmother tongue. It is only important that it represents a legitimization of a new identity and a new power with which new authorities and new masses are consensually related to each other to the point of believing that they have been so related (Fishman, 1974b, p. 89).

The presence of the dominant official language, Farsi, in the home as well as relatively positive attitudes towards its use in the home can be taken as a sign of the success of language policies of the state to promote Farsi (Baker, 2006; Caldas, 2012), and the national identity (see Anderson, 1983; Billig, 1995; May, 2006). This has strong implications for Azeri maintenance in Iran.

## **7.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined Azeris' attitudes and practices with respect to using languages in the home as well as language policies in the macro domains of the education sector, and the broadcasting media in the way that they can be seen to influence language choice in the home domain. Although one might take daily usage of Azeri and the size of Azeri-speaking population in Tabriz as evidence that Azeri is not overwhelmed by Farsi, this thesis proposes a different scenario. The data analyzed in this chapter shows that Azeri parents and children use Farsi and Turkish along with Azeri to different extents in the domain of home. Azeri may not be endangered at the moment, but the intergenerational continuity of Azeri appears to be disrupted in some families. Given the lack of supportive and protective policies with respect to Azeri use in macro domains and institutions, and Azeris' linguistic attitudes and behavior, a warning bell should be sounded about the future of Azeri in Tabriz.

Having discussed language policies in the macro domains as well as attitudes at the grass roots level, the next and final chapter of this thesis synthesizes the findings of this thesis and reflects on areas for further research.

## **Chapter Eight: Conclusion**

### **8.0 Introduction**

This research has demonstrated the dynamic interplay between macro language policies of a nation-state (de jure policies), and grass-roots practices among a minority group (de facto policies) in an under-researched region, i.e. Azeris in Tabriz, Iran, with a particular focus on how those grassroots level attitudes and practices influence Azeri intergenerational transmission. Taking an ecological approach to language maintenance/shift processes and language policy and planning activities, this thesis has illustrated how the ecology shaped by LPP activities and Discourses of the dominant group affects family language policy among Azeris.

This final chapter synthesizes the contribution of this research to our understanding of the relation between language policies at national level and language shift among minority groups. The chapter begins with a summary of theoretical frameworks used in the thesis, discussing the contribution of this study to each of those theoretical frameworks. The findings of each chapter of the thesis are then presented. Finally, the areas for further research are discussed.

### **8.1 Theoretical frameworks**

Language maintenance is generally viewed as the responsibility and task of a community and of the family (Fishman, 1991; Yu, 2010). Without parents' commitment to pass on their ethnic language to their children, language maintenance efforts and/or reversing language shift endeavors will not succeed in achieving their goals (Grenoble, 2011). However, despite parents' primary and principal role in language maintenance in the home, it is argued that their decisions, choice and agency within the family unit are constrained by ecological factors to the extent that they do not always have a "free" choice (Lane, 2010; Sicoli, 2011; Spolsky, 2009). The family unit in which decisions are made in relation to languages is under pressure from the ecology outside the home which is shaped by macro domains and institutions such as education systems, media, language use in public sphere, etc. Each domain and institution is said to create its own pressure towards language maintenance/shift (Spolsky, 2011, p. 149).

This thesis has integrated a number of theoretical frameworks and models to unravel the question of "what is going on?" (Wolcott, 2008) both within the family unit and the ecology surrounding it. The ecology of language paradigm was used as an

overarching framework to acknowledge that language maintenance/shift does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, languages require a sustainable and complex supportive system. Using the Greek root for ecology, i.e. *oikos* meaning home, I argued that languages need an *oikos*, i.e. "a complex ecological support system," rather than only home, i.e. the family unit, for their sustained well-being (c.f. Mühlhäusler, 1996, 1992). This paradigm was critiqued in this thesis, however, because its "green" approach towards linguistic issues, does not take adequate account of power relations between groups (Edwards, 2010). The contribution of this thesis to the ecology of language paradigm is to explain how changes in language ecologies, for good or ill, can be made through LPP processes.

Two frameworks proposed by Shohamy (2006), and Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) were utilized to explore the political and ideological nature of manipulations of language ecologies. Using these two models, the dual role of state-run institutions and domains was identified. Shohamy (2006) argues for the recognition and realization of how the education system, media, language rules and regulations, public signage, etc. work in favor of the dominant language. Labeled as policy devices and mechanisms, Shohamy argues that these devices are used to manipulate peoples, turning particular ideologies into practices. Such institutions and domains have traditionally been seen as "institutional support" which can play a determining role in the fate of languages (Giles, et al., 1977). What this research has contributed to these frameworks is further attention to, firstly, how these domains and institutions mediate between ideology and practice, and, secondly, to consider who governs those domains and institutions and in whose favor they are utilized. Thirdly, having applied a developed version of Lo Bianco's "policy as text, discourse, and performance" model (Lo Bianco, 2005, 2008c, 2010b, 2012a), the Discursive function of such domains has been stressed in this thesis, suggesting policy often works in a more covert manner. In other words, policy uses people's inattention to and unawareness of its tools and devices and how they operate to its advantage, normalizing certain power relations in the society.

Lo Bianco's model emphasizes policy as not only the policy texts, but also what precedes and/or follows those texts in the form of discussions and debates, as well as how policy is performed. The analysis of this discursive aspect of policy shows how policies are altered or tailored to achieve certain goals and meet particular needs. This suggests and stresses that the discourse of policy makers, policy implementers, and policy consumers are as important as, if not more important than, the policy texts.

The contribution of this research to Lo Bianco's model is distinguishing between and including both small 'd' discourse and big 'D' Discourse in policy analysis. I have argued that policy, besides texts and discourses, can also exist as Discourses, i.e. "ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity" (Gee, 2011, p. 29). Given that Discourses are embedded in a variety of institutions (Fairclough, 2011; Gee, 2011; van Dijk, 2008), I have demonstrated that implementation of particular policies within the domains and institutions such as the education system, media, and linguistic landscape can create, promulgate, and disseminate particular Discourses about the value and position of groups and their languages in the society. In a sense, performing policies in and through macro domains and institutions, dominant groups can plan favorable Discourses to normalize certain power relations.

The performative dimension of policy proposed by Lo Bianco primarily refers to policy implementation which is closely associated with my definition of Discourse planning. This research has used 'Discourse planning' to specifically refer to the performance of state-run institutions and domains which act as a role model for people to follow. It has been suggested in the study that the performance aspect of policy at this level is Discursive, and the type of Discourse promoted and promulgated in such domains and institutions is most often governed by the wishes and intentions of those in power. Policy as performance can be also defined as the practices of policy consumers. This definition corresponds to Spolsky's (2004, 2012) notion of practices in his model, i.e. the linguistic behavior of people at the grass roots level. Having developed and presented a comprehensive model in chapter two, I have argued that policy, either as texts, discourses/Discourses, or performance, or in all its forms together, are in fact interventions into language ecologies with strong implications for language maintenance/shift processes. It can be then argued that language maintenance/shift or reversing language shift can be the outcome or result of specific language policies (García, 2012, p. 81).

In sum, this research has shown the complex interplay between the layers of language policy and planning, and how and through what mechanisms those LPP decisions are turned into practices, which might result in particular family language policies in the domain of home. In other words, this thesis has demonstrated that the domain of home and the interactions between family members in the home are under the constant influence of outside ecology. "Language minorization" can be then said to reflect "social and political inequalities" (Sallabank, 2012, p. 122). Home has been viewed as the most important



domain where languages are maintained. As a result, the mere reliance on the macro domains to promote intergenerational transmission within communities while ignoring the role of family has been likened to blowing air into a tire which has a puncture (Fishman, 1991, p. xii). What I have argued in this thesis is that arguments made by Fishman and other scholars should not be construed as indicating the insignificance of those macro domains and their impact on language maintenance. If the mere reliance on the macro domains to maintain a language is like blowing air into a flat tire, the mere reliance on the domain of home to save or maintain a language can be likened to nails on the road which may cause a puncture in the tire. That is, it is wishful thinking that languages can be maintained or saved only in the home without being recognized and used in macro domains.

The findings of the study are synthesized below, discussing each chapter's contribution to this research. Chapter three discussed the methodologies used in this research. Chapter four, five, and six, explored de facto policies in the education system, linguistic landscape and the broadcasting media which constitute the ecology surrounding the domain of home. Azeri parents' attitudes and ideologies were discussed in chapter seven.

## **8.2 Synthesis of findings**

The main reason for the research design used in this study was to both describe the linguistic situation in Tabriz and possibly explain why Azeri is being increasingly overwhelmed by Farsi. To do so, as described in chapter three, data was collected in two phases. Phase one of the data collection included interviews with children, authorities of ten kindergartens, a focus-group interview with six mothers of young children, and photos of public signs. A large part of the data collected in phase one was used to explore the ecology external to the domain of home. Using an attitude questionnaire, phase two specifically investigated Azeri parents' attitudes and ideologies towards the two languages, Azeri and Farsi, with respect to their use in the domain of home, education system and the broadcasting media.

Analysis of language policies in the three selected macro domains constituting the ecology outside home suggested that Azeri was being increasingly overwhelmed by Farsi. The examination of language rules and regulations in the Iranian Constitution as well as the de facto educational policies with respect to Azeri in pre-schools and kindergartens demonstrated in chapter four how a "sink or swim" (May, 2008a) type of education system

serves the dominant language, Farsi. The examination of ten kindergarten and preschool authorities' discourse suggests that they consider Farsi to be a necessity for upward social, educational and economic mobility. By contrast, Azeri is naively seen as a language which will be learned "anyways" as it holds the status of mother tongue. Farsi-only education system as well as the compulsory use of Farsi in other administrative domains and institutions has boosted the instrumental value of the language making Azeris (and perhaps all Iranians) learn Farsi. As a corollary to this, literacy in Azeri has dramatically decreased which is clearly reflected in domains where writing is required, e.g. public signage.

One of the domains which mirrors the dynamics of an ethnolinguistic situation is its linguistic landscapes, i.e. public signage (Calvet, 2006). Chapter five investigated the linguistic landscape in Tabriz to showcase Azeri's absence in public signage. The analysis of data, i.e. language use patterns in public signage, in this chapter demonstrates not only Azeri is absent in governmental signage, connoting that Azeri is not officially supported in this domain, but also it is absent on signage erected by the private sector. The absolute absence of Azeri invites a range of interpretations. Firstly, the absence of Azeri on public signage as the marker of geographical territories (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) implies that uniformity rather than diversity is encouraged from above, i.e. the governmental policies. As a consequence, an uninformed person who does not speak the language may walk through Tabriz without realizing that a language different from Farsi is spoken in the city. Secondly, given the Discursive function of linguistic landscapes which can be used in status building, the absence of Azeri suggests that Azeri is not of much instrumental or communicative value. As a result, Azeri is not used for communication purposes in writing on public signage although it is a written language with books available in the library. Thirdly, being viewed as only an oral language, as the linguistic landscape data analysis suggests, Azeri is highly likely to be pushed into only oral domains which in turn might endanger Azeri to a greater extent in future.

Chapter six focused on the local TV channel available to Azeris in Tabriz, Sahand TV, as a type of institutional support. Established in 2000, Sahand TV presently broadcasts 24 hours of programs seven days a week. Drawing on an analysis of data collected over a constructed week from programs broadcast on Sahand TV and data collected through an attitude questionnaire, chapter six shows, firstly, that the airtime for Farsi and Azeri programs is nearly equally divided, with some Arabic used on the channel as the liturgical language. Secondly, a deeper analysis into the programs broadcast on Sahand TV suggests Sahand TV's role in Discourse planning. Airing certain programs in Farsi, such as those

aimed at children and teenagers, and science/technology related programs, and other programs in Azeri, such as shows related to Tabriz and surrounding towns and villages, Sahand TV seems to be playing a role in Discourse planning. The performance of policies on Sahand TV, in line with the education system and linguistic landscape, can be referred to as a type of public Discourse which not only reflects Azeri's lower status and value compared to Farsi but also conveys this message to its audience.

To find out how policies in the macro domains discussed above impact family language policies in the domain of home, chapter seven explored Azeri parents' attitudes and ideologies concerning the use of Azeri and/or Farsi in the home using a large-scale questionnaire. The questionnaire data on the parents' attitudes was supplemented by observations conducted over a week in three different homes. The observations were conducted to find out to what extent the parents' reported attitudes and ideologies turn into practice on the ground. The analysis of the data suggests that Azeri parents who participated in the research do not hold strong views about Azeri and speaking it in the home. On the other hand, they hold relatively positive attitudes towards Farsi. The observations also indicate that Azeri children are exposed to Farsi through television, broadcasting media in general, and, parents are aware of Farsi's higher instrumental value, leading them to speak Farsi to children even before they start primary school. The questionnaire data analyzed in chapter seven also demonstrated the dynamics and challenges minority media may face in the modern era. The presence and availability of satellite channels to minorities has made it possible for them to view channels broadcast from other cities and countries, imposing stiff competition among channels to attract audience. The analysis of Azeris' reported data shows Sahand TV has lost the battle to Farsi channels and Turkish channels broadcast through satellite, making Sahand TV as merely a symbolic institutional support with only 1% viewers. This might lead Azeris to shift to 'bigger languages' in the long run. As Grenoble (2011, p. 35) notes, broadcast media diminish "the last sanctuary for the local language" by bringing languages of wider communication into the home, making the use of the local language increasingly limited. The analysis suggested that the participating parents believe that children who learn Farsi before school have less difficulty at school, easing their integration into the education system. However, surprisingly, the participants did not show much cognizance about the threats which might endanger Azeri in the future even if they do not transfer the language to the next generation. The major reason for this seemed to be Azeri's status as the "mother

tongue" (see Calvet, 1998), with 84% of the parents believing that Azeri will be spoken in the city forever in any circumstances.

Overall, this thesis has investigated how home as the domain where the major part of intergenerational transmission takes place comes under the influence of pressures from external domains and institutions which form the ecology surrounding home. Furthermore, the thesis has shown those domains and institutions which form the external ecology of the home are governed and controlled by LPP decisions and processes, giving them the status of LPP devices and mechanisms in Shohamy's (2006) terms. Given the Discursive functions of the LPP devices, one may say that LPP processes in this era unlike the past, where aboriginal and indigenous people, for instance, were *forced* to behave in a certain way (e.g. Alia & Bull, 2005), work through persuasion rather than coercion. As van Dijk (2008, p. 14) puts it, "one needs no coercion if one persuades, seduces, indoctrinates or manipulates people." Such persuasion most often takes place through restrictions defined and brought about by domains and institutions run by the dominant group/people. It seems fair to say that because governments do not and/or cannot access the domain of home directly, what they can do to affect their citizens' linguistic attitudes and behavior is to plan a particular ecology outside the home. This planning, as I have argued in this thesis, can be described as primarily Discursive.

Language, and thus its vitality and endangerment, is deeply embedded in a linguistic ecology made up of a complex nexus of components and elements. Efforts towards language maintenance or reversing language shift cannot succeed until they also attend to those elements of the linguistic ecology which are themselves factors in language loss (Grenoble, 2011, p. 44). Accordingly, if any improvement is to be achieved in making the linguistic ecology more desirable for Azeri in Tabriz, '*counter-planning*' should be carried out to improve the situation in these three domains for Azeri. I propose the term '*counter-planning*' to characterize activities which aim to return the ecology of a language to a desirable and healthy state through LPP decisions and processes. To do so, further research is required in these domains to find out how the linguistic ecology can be improved for Azeri in Tabriz. The following section explores the areas in which further research can be carried out.

### **8.3 Areas for further research**

As mentioned above, the case of Azeri in Tabriz is under-researched. Four areas touched upon in this thesis can be consequently researched in more depth. Further research

can be undertaken in the domain of the education sector. It would be intriguing to investigate how Azeri children switch to Farsi-only education in primary schools. More research is required to examine student-student and student-teacher interactions inside the classroom in primary schools. This can indicate to what extent Azeri children use the Farsi they have learned in kindergartens. Exploring teachers and authorities' ideologies and attitudes towards languages, as those who are involved in policy implementation, would be also of paramount significance. Such studies could show to what extent Azeri teachers and authorities in Tabriz are willing to be involved in Azeri education if proactive policies existed.

Further studies can be undertaken on linguistic landscape and language use in Tabriz. Research into the ideologies and attitudes of the private sector could be conducted, for example through in-depth interviews with shopkeepers and so on, to find out in detail why Azeris choose Farsi and English on their public signage rather than Azeri. Such an investigation could examine whether there is a relation between the absence of Azeri on private signage and low literacy in Azeri (c.f. Shiohata, 2012).

The domain of broadcasting media could be also examined in more depth by investigating the attitudes and ideologies of the authorities involved in the broadcasting media in Tabriz. Such an inquiry could explore to what extent authorities in Tabriz have the latitude to prepare Azeri programs, and to what extent the policies in this institution are dictated by the central government. The findings of such a study could suggest how, if at all, Sahand TV is used as a tool for Discourse planning.

More qualitative research is required to examine family language policies in the domain of the home. Detailed observations need to be made to examine how language shift takes place in interaction between parents and children in the form of code-switching and code-mixing (c.f. Nercissians, 2001). Such interactions at the grass roots level may demonstrate how Azeri children, influenced by ecology outside the home, switch to Farsi even before they enter Farsi-medium schools.

Another more important research topic which emerged from this research is ethnic and national identity and how attachment to those two identities is managed. There is anecdotal evidence that many Azeris regard themselves as Azeri even if they do not know or speak Azeri because of immigration to other cities or language shift. Furthermore, most Azeris consider themselves as both Azeri and Iranian. Detailed research is required to probe into this issue as it could have a major influence on the fate of Azeri.

## 8.4 Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to expand language maintenance/shift and language policy and planning frameworks theoretically as well as empirically (Shohamy, 2009). The study is a response to Shohamy's critique of the field that "personal experiences have rarely been viewed as part of the domain of language policy, since policies are generally created from the top down, often to meet ideological or political agendas" (Shohamy, 2009, p. 185). This research also extends language maintenance/shift research by investigating the interplay between the LPP activities of nation-states influencing the ecology outside home and the dynamics of family language policy within the ecology inside home. The thesis emphasizes that parents, though acting ostensibly as free agents, do not always have a free choice owing to socioeconomic and political constraints. The study has attempted to both describe the language-contact situation in Tabriz by attending to top-down policies, and illuminate how Azeris respond to those policies by exploring their attitudes and ideologies towards language use in a number of domains. The analysis of de facto policies presented in this research can "reflect and influence ways of thinking about language policies" (Shohamy, 2009, p. 188).

This research has explained the issue of how, if at all, Azeri is being transmitted to the next generation. Such a process which mainly takes place in the home is constantly influenced by the ecology in which language contact occurs. An examination of the various top-down pressures on the de facto policy in Tabriz suggests that firstly, Azeri is being increasingly overwhelmed by Farsi in macro domains such as the education sector, linguistic landscape, and the media, and secondly, Discourses created through such domains and institutions pointing to the higher value of Farsi seem to have led to particular attitudes and ideologies towards Azeri and Farsi. Such attitudes and ideologies, as I have argued throughout the thesis, may endanger Azeri in future.

Finally, I have attempted to sound a warning bell for Azeris, and potentially for other minorities in Iran, to become more cognizant of LPP processes which may work against their language resulting in language attrition/loss. Although all languages in Iran are officially recognized, in practice they are not supported in macro institutions and domains creating undesirable ecology for minorities. Owing to the lack of proactive policies obliging protection of minority languages, minority languages in Iran face an uncertain destiny. It is in this situation that government's inaction can be viewed as an action which influences the fate of languages. To maintain and foster minority languages

in Iran, more diversity-oriented endeavors as well as proactive and obligatory policies on the part of the government are consequently required. Otherwise, the current "no-policy policy" (Fishman, 2006) situation is highly likely to lead to language endangerment and language death in the long run among minority groups in Iran.

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# Appendix One: English and Farsi Questionnaires

## Information Sheet for Parents

I'm a PhD student in applied linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. As part of this degree, I am undertaking a research project leading to a thesis. This project is examining the language policies, language practices and language vitality of Azeri in Tabriz. The University requires that ethics approval be obtained for research involving human participants. This project has obtained Human Ethics Committee approval.

I would like to invite you as a parent of a young child to participate in this research. If you agree, I would like you to complete the questionnaire which has been brought to you by your child. I would be very grateful for your assistance in answering some questions about different language-related issues in Tabriz. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers and you do not even need to write your name on it. I am only interested in your personal opinion. Please give your answers thoroughly and sincerely, as only this will guarantee the success of this investigation.

Responses collected will form the basis of my research project and will be put into a written report on an anonymous basis. It will not be possible for you to be identified personally. All material collected will be kept confidential. The names of the participants will not be mentioned during the data collection, and no other person besides me and my supervisors, Professor Janet Holmes and Dr Meredith Marra, will see the data. The thesis will be submitted to the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies and deposited in the University Library. It is intended that one or more articles will also be submitted for publication in scholarly journals.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact me or my supervisors through the following e-mail addresses.

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To complete this questionnaire, please consider the following definitions:

- 1) Azeri: the language which is spoken in Tabriz
- 2) Turkish: the language spoken in Turkey.
- 3) Farsi: the official language of Iran.
- 4) Sahand TV: the local channel of Tabriz.
- 5) National channels: Channels which are broadcast nationwide, such as channels 1,2,3,4

If you are willing to complete the questionnaire, please do so and return it by asking your child to hand it in to his/her teacher. It will take 10-20 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Seyed Hadi Mirvahedi

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## Part I

### Instruction:

Please read each question below carefully and check only one box in the table. The questions ask you to rate your agreement or disagreement with a statement from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Please note that St/Ag = Strongly Agree, Ag = Agree, So/Ag = Somewhat Agree, NAg/Dis = Neither Agree Nor Disagree, So/Dis = Somewhat disagree, Dis = Disagree, St/Dis = Strongly disagree. For example:

Question	St/Ag	Ag	So/Ag	N Ag/Dis	So/Dis	Dis	St/Dis
Snakes are more dangerous than spiders.		×					

This shows that the respondent agrees that snakes are more dangerous than spiders.

	Questions	St/Ag	Ag	So/Ag	N Ag/Dis	So/Dis	Dis	St/Dis
1	People should speak Farsi with their children at home.							
2	I wish there were schools which had language courses on Azeri.							
3	Watching Sahand TV is a waste of time.							
4	To be a true Azeri, people must speak Azeri.							
5	People need Farsi in Tabriz to get a good job							
6	There would be no benefit for my child to learn Azeri literature, reading and writing.							
7	I like the programs on Sahand TV.							
8	To be a true Iranian, people must speak Farsi.							
9	It would be a loss if we don't know Farsi and the Iranian culture.							
10	Children who learn only Azeri at home are very intelligent.							
11	I like watching Farsi TV channels.							
12	Farsi should be taught in schools.							
13	Without Azeri, people would lose their Azeri identity.							
14	One can live comfortably in Tabriz without Farsi.							

	<i>Questions</i>	<i>St/Ag</i>	<i>Ag</i>	<i>So/Ag</i>	<i>N Ag/Dis</i>	<i>So/Dis</i>	<i>Dis</i>	<i>St/Dis</i>
15	Although I am an Azeri, I'm primarily an Iranian.							
16	Azeri has no place in the modern world.							
17	I feel proud (like it) when my child speaks Farsi.							
18	I wish there were schools where all subjects were taught in Azeri.							
19	The programs on Sahand TV are not interesting.							
20	Without Farsi, people would lose their Iranian identity.							
21	Speaking Farsi is associated with high social class.							
22	Children who learn Farsi at home are very intelligent.							
23	I would send my child to a school where there was a course on Azeri.							
24	There's no relationship between Azeri identity and the Azeri language.							
25	Speaking Azeri is associated with low social class.							
26	You can be identified as Iranian without being able to speak Farsi.							
27	There's no relationship between Iranian identity and the Farsi language.							
28	Farsi programs are much better than Sahand TV programs.							
29	It would be great if Azeri people could read and write Azeri.							
30	I will stop my child if he/she uses Farsi at home.							
31	You cannot be successful if you know only Azeri.							
32	Though I am Iranian, I'm primarily an Azeri.							
33	I would send my child to a school where they taught all subjects in Azeri.							
34	I hate it when my child speaks Farsi at home.							
35	I'm happy that children learn Farsi at school							
36	I prefer watching Sahand TV to watching Farsi TV channels.							
37	Knowing Farsi makes our life in Tabriz easier.							
38	Teaching children Azeri at school would be a waste of time.							
39	I would not send my child to school where they taught all subjects in Azeri.							

	<i>Questions</i>	<i>St/Ag</i>	<i>Ag</i>	<i>So/Ag</i>	<i>N Ag/Dis</i>	<i>So/Dis</i>	<i>Dis</i>	<i>St/Dis</i>
40	I do not care if my children or grandchildren cannot speak Azeri.							
41	Azeri people should speak Azeri at home.							

## Part II

### Personal Details:

Please answer the following questions about yourself. As your name is not asked for in this research, the information will be anonymous and will be also treated confidentially.

What's the main street or suburb you are living in?

.....

(Please do not provide the detailed address)

.....

• Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

• Age: 25-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ over 45 ☐

1. Your education level:

.....

2. Your job:

.....

3. Your spouse's education

level:.....

4. Your spouse's job:

.....

5. What language(s) do you most often speak with your spouse at home?

.....

6. What language(s) do you most often speak with your child at home?.....

7. Which channel(s) do you watch most?

a) Iranian national channels (1,2,3,4) ☐

c) Farsi satellite channels ☐

b) Turkish satellite channels ☐

d) Sahand TV (Tabriz channel) ☐

Other (please specify):

.....

8. Which channel(s) does your child watch most?

a) Iranian national channels (1,2,3,4) ☐

c) Farsi satellite channels ☐

b) Turkish satellite channels ☐  
channel) ☐

d) Sahand TV (Tabriz

Other (please specify):

.....

9. Which one describes you best?

a) I'm a native speaker of Azeri ☐

b) I'm a native speaker of Farsi ☐

c) I've learned Azeri as a second language ☐

10. By circling the number, please rate your proficiency to speak, comprehend, read, and write **Azeri** below. (1= almost no proficiency; 10= native proficiency)

Speaking:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comprehension: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Reading:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Writing:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

11. By circling the number, please rate your proficiency to speak, comprehend, read, and write **Farsi** below. (1= almost no proficiency; 10= native proficiency)

Speaking:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comprehension: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Reading:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Writing:      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

12. I'm learning (have learned) Turkish by watching Turkish satellite channels.

True ☐ False ☐

13. My child is leaning (has leaned) Turkish by watching Turkish satellite channels.

True ☐ False ☐

14. My child is learning (has learned) Azeri by watching Azeri channels (Sahand TV or Azeri satellite channels)

True ☐ False ☐

15. I spoke Farsi with my child before he/she went to school.

True ☐ False ☐

16. I encouraged my child to speak Farsi before he/she went to school.

True ☐ False ☐

---

17. How long do you predict Azeri will be used in Tabriz?

50-100 years ☐ 100-200 years ☐ More than 200 years ☐ For ever ☐

Why do you predict so?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please write down any comments about the questionnaire or the research:

-----

-----

-----

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-----

-----

... Thank you...

## برگه اطلاعات برای والدین

من دانشجوی مقطع دکترا در دانشگاه ویکتوریای ویلینگتون نیوزلند هستم و این تحقیق بخشی از مطالعات این مقطع و با هدف انجام رساله دکترا اجرا می‌شود. این پروژه سیاست‌گذاری‌ها و خط‌مشی‌های زبانی، رفتارهای زبانی و درجه حیات زبان آذری در تبریز را می‌آزماید. دانشگاه لازم می‌داند برای تحقیقی که با مشارکت‌کنندگان انسانی در ارتباط است، موافقت و تایید اخلاقی بگیرد.

مایلم از شما به عنوان پدر یا مادر یک کودک دعوت به عمل بیاورم که در این تحقیق مشارکت نمایید. در صورت تمایل، از شما دعوت می‌شود پرسشنامه‌ای که فرزندان به همراه آورده است را تکمیل کنید. من از همکاری و مساعدت شما در پاسخ‌گویی به این سؤالات که درباره موارد مرتبط با تفاوت‌های زبانی در تبریز است، بسیار سپاسگزار خواهم بود. این یک آزمون نیست و هیچ پاسخ درست یا غلطی وجود ندارد و حتی نیازی نیست که شما نام خود را بر روی آن بنویسید. من تنها مایل به دانستن دیدگاه و نظر شخصی شما هستم. خواهشمند است به طور کامل و صادقانه به سؤالات پاسخ دهید. تنها در این صورت است که موفقیت این تحقیق تضمین خواهد شد.

اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده مبنای پروژه تحقیقاتی من را شکل خواهد داد و نتایج بدون ذکر نام در قالب گزارشی مکتوب ارائه خواهد شد. ممکن نخواهد بود که شما شخصاً شناسایی شوید. تمام اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده محرمانه نگه‌داری خواهد شد. اسامی شرکت‌کنندگان در طول تحقیق ذکر نخواهد شد و هیچ‌کس به جز من و اساتید راهنمایم پروفیسور جنت هولمز و دکتر مردیث مارا، اطلاعات (داده‌ها) را نخواهند دید. رساله دکترا به دانشکده مطالعات زبان‌شناسی و زبان‌شناسی کاربردی ارائه شده و در کتابخانه دانشگاه نگه‌داری خواهد شد. همچنین قرار است یک یا چند مقاله برای انتشار در نشریات علمی ارائه شود.

اگر سؤالی داشته یا مایل به دریافت اطلاعات بیشتر در خصوص پروژه هستید، می‌توانید از طریق ایمیل‌های زیر با من یا اساتید راهنمای من تماس بگیرید:

[Seyedhadi.Mirvahedi@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Seyedhadi.Mirvahedi@vuw.ac.nz)

[Janet.Holmes@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Janet.Holmes@vuw.ac.nz)

[Meredith.Marra@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Meredith.Marra@vuw.ac.nz)

برای تکمیل این پرسشنامه، لطفاً تعاریف زیر را در نظر بگیرید:

- 1) آذری: زبانی که در تبریز بدان سخن گفته می‌شود
  - 2) ترکی: زبانی که در ترکیه بدان سخن گفته می‌شود
  - 3) فارسی: زبان رسمی ایران
  - 4) تلویزیون سهند: شبکه محلی (استانی) تبریز
  - 5) شبکه‌های ملی: شبکه‌هایی که در کل کشور پخش می‌شود، مانند شبکه‌های 1، 2، 3، 4
- اگر مایل به تکمیل این پرسشنامه هستید، لطفاً به سؤالات پاسخ دهید و از فرزندان بخواهید که آن را به معلمش تحویل دهد. پر کردن این پرسشنامه 10 تا 20 دقیقه زمان خواهد برد.
- از همکاری شما بسیار سپاسگزارم.

سید هادی میرواحدی

دانشکده مطالعات زبان‌شناسی و زبان‌شناسی کاربردی، دانشگاه ویکتوریای ویلینگتون، نیوزیلند

## بخش اول:

### دستورالعمل:

لطفاً سوالات زیر را با دقت بخوانید و تنها يك گزینه را در جدول علامت بزنید. لطفاً در عبارات زیر موافقت یا مخالفت خود را با عبارت مطرح شده از بسیار موافق تا بسیار مخالف درجه‌بندی کنید.

به عنوان مثال:

سوالات	بسیار موافق	موافق	تا حدی موافق	بی نظر (نه موافق و نه مخالف)	تا حدی مخالف	مخالف	بسیار مخالف
مارها از عنکبوت‌ها خطرناک‌ترند.		×					

علامت نشان می‌دهد که پاسخ‌دهنده با این عبارت که مارها از عنکبوت‌ها خطرناک‌ترند موافق است.

	سوالات	بسیار موافق	موافق	تا حدی موافق	بی نظر	تا حدی مخالف	مخالف	بسیار مخالف
1	افراد باید با فرزندان‌شان در خانه فارسی صحبت کنند.							
2	ای کاش مدارس وجود داشت که درس زبان آذری در آن تدریس می‌شد.							
3	تماشای تلویزیون سهند اتلاف وقت است.							
4	برای يك آذری واقعی بودن، باید آذری صحبت کرد.							
5	افراد برای پیدا کردن يك شغل خوب در تبریز به زبان فارسی نیاز دارند.							
6	برای فرزند من سودی نخواهد داشت که خواندن، نوشتن و ادبیات آذری را بیاموزد.							
7	من برنامه‌های تلویزیون سهند را دوست دارم.							
8	برای يك ایرانی واقعی بودن، افراد باید فارسی صحبت کنند.							
9	این يك زیان و فقدان خواهد بود اگر ما زبان فارسی و فرهنگ ایرانی را نشناسیم.							
10	کودک‌انی که در خانه فقط آذری می‌آموزند، خیلی باهوش هستند.							

	سوالات	بسیار موافق	موافق	تا حدی موافق	بی نظر	تا حدی مخالف	مخالف	بسیار مخالف
11	من تماشای شبکه‌های تلویزیون فارسی را دوست دارم.							
12	زبان فارسی باید در مدارس آموزش داده شود.							
13	بدون زبان آذری، افراد هویت آذری خود را از دست می‌دهند.							
14	افراد می‌توانند در تبریز به راحتی زندگی کنند بدون آن که زبان فارسی بدانند.							
15	اگرچه من يك آذری هستم، اما پیش از آن يك ایرانی‌ام.							
16	زبان آذری کاربردی در جهان کنونی مدرن ندارد.							
17	من احساس غرور می‌کنم (دوست دارم) وقتی فرزندم فارسی حرف می‌زند.							
18	ای کاش مدارس وجود داشت که در آن همه دروس به زبان آذری تدریس می‌شد.							
19	برنامه‌های شبکه سهند جذاب نیست.							
20	بدون فارسی، ایرانیان هویت ایرانی‌شان را از دست می‌دهند.							
21	به زبان فارسی حرف زدن به منزله باکلاس بودن است.							
22	کودکانی که در خانه فارسی می‌آموزند خیلی باهوش هستند.							
23	من فرزندم را به مدرسه‌ای خواهم فرستاد که درسی برای آموزش زبان آذری داشته باشد.							
24	هیچ رابطه‌ای بین هویت آذری و زبان آذری وجود ندارد.							
25	به زبان آذری حرف زدن به منزله بی‌کلاس بودن است.							
26	شما می‌توانید يك ایرانی شناخته شوید، بدون آنکه قادر باشید به زبان فارسی صحبت کنید.							



	سوالات	بسیار موافق	موافق	تا حدی موافق	بی نظر	تا حدی مخالف	مخالف	بسیار مخالف
27	هیچ رابطه‌ای بین هویت ایرانی و زبان فارسی وجود ندارد.							
28	برنامه‌های فارسی خیلی بهتر از برنامه‌های تلویزیون سهند است.							
29	خیلی خوب خواهد بود اگر افراد آذری بتوانند به آذری بخوانند و بنویسند.							
30	من جلوی فرزندم را می‌گیرم اگر در خانه فارسی صحبت کند.							
31	شما نمی‌توانید موفق شوید اگر فقط زبان آذری بدانید.							
32	اگرچه من یک ایرانی هستم، اما پیش از آن یک آذری‌ام.							
33	من فرزندم را به مدرسه‌ای می‌فرستم که در آن همه دروس به زبان آذری تدریس شود.							
34	من از اینکه فرزندم در خانه فارسی صحبت کند متنفرم.							
35	من خوشحالم که کودکان در مدرسه فارسی می‌آموزند.							
36	من ترجیح می‌دهم به جای شبکه‌های تلویزیون فارسی، شبکه سهند ببینم.							
37	دانستن زبان فارسی زندگی ما را در تبریز آسان‌تر می‌کند.							
38	آموزش زبان آذری به کودکان در مدارس اتلاف وقت خواهد بود.							
39	من فرزندم را به مدرسه‌ای که همه دروس در آن به زبان آذری تدریس می‌شود نخواهم فرستاد.							
40	برایم اهمیتی ندارد اگر فرزندان و نوه‌هایم نتوانند آذری صحبت کنند.							
41	آذری‌ها (آذری زبان‌ها) باید در خانه آذری صحبت کنند.							

## بخش دوم:

### مشخصات فردی:

لطفاً به سؤالات زیر درباره خود پاسخ دهید. از آنجا که نام شما برای این تحقیق سؤال نشده است اطلاعات بی‌نام بوده و همچنین به صورت محرمانه نگهداری خواهد شد.

نام خیابان اصلی یا محله‌ای که در آن زندگی می‌کنید چیست؟

(لطفاً آدرس کامل خود را ننویسید)

.....

• جنسیت: ☐ مرد ☐ زن

• سن: ☐ 35-25 ☐ 45-36 ☐ بالای 45

1. سطح (میزان) تحصیلات شما:

2. شغل شما:

3. سطح (میزان) تحصیلات همسر شما:

4. شغل همسر شما:

5. شما اغلب در خانه به چه زبانی (یا زبان‌هایی) با همسران صحبت می‌کنید؟

آذری ☐ فارسی ☐ سایر (لطفاً نام ببرید): .....

6. شما اغلب در خانه به چه زبانی (یا زبان‌هایی) با فرزندان صحبت می‌کنید؟

آذری ☐ فارسی ☐ سایر (لطفاً نام ببرید): .....

7. اغلب چه شبکه (یا شبکه‌هایی) را تماشا می‌کنید؟ (لطفاً فقط یک گزینه را انتخاب کنید)

الف) شبکه‌های ملی ایران (مانند شبکه‌های 1، 2، 3، 4)

ب) شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای ترکیه

ج) شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای فارسی

د) شبکه‌های سهند (شبکه تبریز)

سایر (لطفاً نام ببرید): .....

8. فرزند شما اغلب چه شبکه (یا شبکه‌هایی) را تماشا می‌کند؟ (لطفاً فقط یک گزینه را انتخاب کنید)

الف) شبکه‌های ملی ایران (مانند شبکه‌های 1، 2، 3، 4)

ب) شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای ترکیه

ج) شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای فارسی

د) تلویزیون (شبکه) سهند (شبکه تبریز)

سایر (لطفاً نام ببرید): .....

9. کدام عبارت بهتر شما را توصیف می‌کند؟

الف) زبان مادری من آذری است.

ب) زبان مادری من فارسی است و من آذری را به عنوان زبان دوم آموخته‌ام.

ج) زبان مادری من فارسی است ولی من آذری را به عنوان زبان دوم نیاموخته‌ام.

10. لطفاً با خط کشیدن دور اعداد زیر، مهارت خود را در صحبت کردن، درک کردن (فهمیدن)، خواندن و نوشتن به زبان آذری درجه‌بندی کنید.

(1= تقریباً بدون مهارت ؛ 10= مهارت کامل (تسلط در حد زبان مادری))

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	صحبت کردن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	درک کردن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	خواندن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	نوشتن:

11. لطفاً با خط کشیدن دور اعداد زیر، مهارت خود را در صحبت کردن، درک کردن (فهمیدن)، خواندن و نوشتن به زبان فارسی درجه‌بندی کنید.

(1= تقریباً بدون مهارت ؛ 10= مهارت کامل (تسلط در حد زبان مادری))

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	صحبت کردن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	درک کردن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	خواندن:
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	نوشتن:

12. با تماشای شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای ترکیه، در حال فراگیری زبان ترکی هستم (یاد گرفته‌ام):

☐ درست ☐ غلط

13. فرزندم با تماشای شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای ترکیه، در حال فراگیری زبان ترکی است (یاد گرفته است):

☐ درست ☐ غلط

14. فرزندم با تماشای شبکه‌های آذری (تلویزیون سهند یا شبکه‌های ماهواره‌ای آذری)، در حال فراگیری زبان آذری است (یاد گرفته است):

☐ درست ☐ غلط

15. پیش از اینکه فرزندم به مدرسه برود با او فارسی صحبت می‌کردم.

☐ درست ☐ غلط

16. پیش از اینکه فرزندم به مدرسه برود، او را تشویق می‌کردم که فارسی صحبت کند.

☐ درست ☐ غلط

17. پیش‌بینی می‌کنید زبان آذری تا چه زمانی در تبریز مورد استفاده قرار بگیرد؟

☐ 100-50 سال ☐ 200-100 سال ☐ بیش از 200 سال ☐ برای همیشه

چرا چنین پیش‌بینی دارید؟

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

لطفاً هر گونه نظر يا پيشنهادي در خصوص پرسشنامه، سوالات و يا تحقيق داريد مطرح نماييد:

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... با سپاس ...

## Appendix Two: Interview Schedules

### Consent Form

Dear Parents:

I am writing to ask for your help with a research project. I would like you to fill out the questionnaire below, and I would like to interview your child about some language issues.

The interview will take 5-10 minutes and it will be about your child's language behavior as well as his/her attitudes towards different TV channels, and it will be carried out before/after the English class in his/her teacher's presence.

If you are willing for your child to participate in this research please sign the form below.

Note: Neither your name nor your child's name will be used in the research.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Seyed Hadi Mirvahedi

Respondent's signature consenting to the child's involvement in the interview

Child's name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## رضایت نامه

والدین گرامی

نامه ای که پیش رو دارید جهت اعلام رضایت شما برای مصاحبه با فرزندان طراحی شده است. این مصاحبه پنج الی ده دقیقه طول خواهد کشید و قبل یا بعد از کلاس زبان فرزندان در کانون زبان انجام خواهد شد. از فرزند شما در مورد رفتار زبانی اش در منزل و نیز رفتار او در خصوص تماشای تلویزیون سوالاتی پرسیده خواهد شد. شما می‌توانید در صورت تمایل رضایت خود را با امضای این نامه اعلام نمایید.

شایان ذکر است که شرکت در این تحقیق اختیاری خواهد بود و شرکت‌کنندگان می‌توانند هر لحظه که بخواهند از مشارکت در تحقیق انصراف دهند. همچنین پاسخ‌های شما کاملاً محرمانه بوده و اسامی شما یا فرزندان در پروژه ذکر نخواهد شد.

پیشاپیش از همکاری صمیمانه شما سپاسگزاری می‌نمایم؛ چه، انجام این تحقیق بدون همکاری شما امکان‌پذیر نخواهد بود.

سید هادی میرواحدی

نام و نام خانوادگی مصاحبه شونده (فرزند): .....

امضای پدر یا مادر: .....

تاریخ: .....

## **Children's (7-10 years old) interview schedule**

### **A. Language behavior**

- How many languages can you speak?
- Could you speak Farsi before you went to school? If yes, how did you learn it?
- Have you attended a kindergarten?
- What language do you speak with your parents? With your siblings? With your friends at school? With your teachers?
- Are there any situations in which you speak Farsi with your parents/siblings/teachers?
- If yes, when and why do you speak Farsi?
- Is there a rule with respect to which channel you should watch in the home?
- If yes, what is it?

### **B. Media**

- How long do you spend watching TV every day?
- Which channel do you watch most?
- Do you ever watch Sahand TV? If no, why?
- If yes, what is your favorite program?
- If you had the choice between Azeri cartoons and Farsi cartoons, which one would you prefer to watch? Why?
- Do you ever listen to the radio? If yes, which radio station(s)?
- Do you ever listen to Tabriz radio?

**Main interview questions with the authorities of the kindergartens:**

- Is there a governmental and official policy as to which language you should use in the kindergarten? If yes, what is it?
- If no, is there a policy set by the institute itself with respect to the language of the instruction? If yes, what is it?
- If no, what language is used as the medium instruction then?
- Why?