
Abbas Deygan Darweesh
Department of English, Faculty of Education, Babylon University
Babil, 25 Sq., Hilla, Iraq
E-mail: abass_d@yahoo.com

Musaab Raheem Alkhazaali (Corresponding author)
Department of English, Faculty of Languages, Kufa University
22 Sq., Najaf, Iraq
E-mail: rahmanmusaab@yahoo.com; council.lang@uokufa.edu.iq

Received: November 8, 2015 Accepted: December 10, 2015 Published: June 11, 2016
doi:10.5296/iss.v4i1.9588 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/iss.v4i1.9588

Abstract
This study addresses a sociolinguistic evaluation of the universal declaration of linguistic rights in 1996. It aims to analyze the basic aspects and motivations of the declaration with reference to the problems that are not dealt with in it. Thus, the current paper adopts the following procedure to achieve its aim: (1) reviewing literature on language rights theories, (2) conducting a qualitative sociolinguistic analysis for each part of the declaration, (3) and discussing the results of analysis with some evaluation of the declaration. This study is supposed to be of value to sociolinguists, critical applied linguists, discourse analysts and language planners. It has been concluded that the universal declaration of linguistic rights is based on the human language rights hypothesis with some reference to the minority hypothesis. The factors that have been addressed are power, dominance, inequality, culture, and identity. Moreover, Language is seen as constituting rather than reflecting identity. The declaration treats important issues in language rights in several domains such as education, communication, politics, socio-economics, technology and public speech.

Keywords: critical sociolinguistics, language rights, universal declaration of language rights, language assimilation, identity
1. Introduction

This study addresses a sociolinguistic evaluation of the universal declaration of linguistic rights in 1996. It aims to analyze the basic aspects and motivations of the declaration with reference to the problems that are not dealt with in it. Thus, the current paper adopts the following procedure to achieve its aim: (1) reviewing literature on language rights theories, (2) conducting a qualitative sociolinguistic analysis for each part of the declaration, (3) and discussing the results of analysis with some evaluation of the declaration. This study is supposed to be of value to sociolinguists, critical applied linguists, discourse analysts and language planners.

2. Language Rights: A Theoretical Background

The study of language rights is one of the crucial domains of a variety of disciplines such as sociology of language, sociolinguistics, language planning and policy. The prominent movements in this regard are the Language Ecology (LE) movement and the Linguistic Human Rights (LHR) movement. The former envisions the relation between language and ecology focusing on the increasing loss of many of the world’s languages in an ecological framework, while the latter "argues, often on the basis of LE premises, for the greater institutional protection and support of minority languages, and their speakers, both within national and supranational contexts" (May, 2003, p. 95). Thus, language rights are concerned with the maintenance of human equality via upgrading language equality and eliminating linguistic diversity. Smith (1999, pp. 1-2) believes that Chomsky’s project of Universal Grammar aims at the emphasis on human equality by linguistic equality.

2.1 Language Rights and Rights of Language

It is important to distinguish between language rights and the rights of language. Ogechi (2003) states that the right of language(s) refers to the right of each and every language in a multilingual society to exist and the equality of opportunity for it to ‘develop’ legal and other technological limbs and to flourish. Language right refers to the right to use the language one is most proficient in, as well as the right of access to the language(s) of empowerment and socio-economic advancement (p. 277).

Thus, language rights are basically human and personal, whereas the rights of language are institutional. However, in many studies both notions are interchangeably used. Even international laws such as those of the European Union mix these two notions as in “Treaty languages,” “official and working languages” and “languages recognized by the Constitution.” (Urrutia and Lasagabaster, 2007, p. 480).

2.3 Problems in Language Rights Hypothesis

Many criticisms have been formulated to attack the language rights hypothesis. May (2005a) lists three basic ones:

-The problem of ‘presentism’: This concerns the failure of the linguistic synchronic approach which cannot explain that the status of official language is the result of a historically political act. Thus, only by using a diachronic approach will we be able to grasp the development of
ideologies that make a given language or variety of language an official, more prestigious and dominant (May, 2005a, pp. 322-323).

-The problem of ‘sanitization’: This means that viewing the dominance of a majority language is considered as normal, natural and even inevitable process (May, 2005a, p. 323).

-The problem of ‘essentialism’: This is another view against language rights hypothesis. It invokes that ‘advocacy of language rights for minority speakers invariably essentialises the languages and the groups concerned, fixing them eternally at a particular point in time when their historically associated language(s) was still widely spoken’ (May, 2005a, p. 327). Such a view asserts the link between language and ethnic identity. As such, minority language rights hypothesis (MLR) is attacked by advocates of the idea that language does not define us and it is only a secondary part of our identity (Edwards, 1994; Eastman, 1984).

2.4 Rights and Regulation

According to Patrick (2005, pp. 371-372), international laws about language rights aim to regulate rather than eliminate certain conflicts. As such, their objective is to keep social justice, equality and freedom of humans. They should be accepted by all nations as social and moral guidelines that organize global community and human rights. Thus, the aim of language rights is to promote ‘small’ or minority languages. It is seen as a part of a ‘sociolinguistic theory of globalization’ (Coupland, 2003).

Moreover, different factors should be evaluated in the light of the promotion and maintenance of indigenous languages. Such factors may be social, economic, and political. Others could be cultural, religious and psychological. Patrick (2005, pp. 385-386) affirms that "language plays a constitutive role in all of these practices. Thus, to advance our investigation of indigenous language rights and maintenance, we need more ethnographic" studies and investigations to have a clear picture of the daily social practice in a more general environment.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2009) illustrates that The United Nation’s 2007 Human Development Report links cultural liberty to language rights and human development. For him, assimilating languages other than the mother tongue kills the native language. He (2009) thinks that "many national minority and most immigrant minority students and many students in post-colonial contexts in the world are being taught through the medium of dominant languages in immersion programmes" (p. 2). In this context, minority is not seen as demographic number, but an indicator of little power. Similarly, Ricento (2005, p. 349) indicates that even liberal nation-states such as USA are in need for more liberation of language rights for minorities and other powerless groups. However, he argues that language-as-right has little to do in the promotion of indigenous or aboriginal languages since language-as-resource has more practical benefits and effects in the United States.

2.5 Language Rights and Equality

Language rights focus on the maintenance of equality in humans. Different instances and vignettes have been presented by scholars to illustrate the strife of nations and minorities to
gain their rights to use their own languages. Hornberger (1998) clarifies that

It is not only Welsh speakers who have become activists for the right to use their own language. Language rights, or linguistic human rights, have taken on increasing urgency worldwide in the light of the twin threat posed by the loss of a vast proportion of the world’s linguistic resources – the endangered languages – and by the growth of world languages like English (p. 450).

English as such may be representing an increasing threat to be dominant over other world languages. A rapid glance at any given department in world universities would summarize the case. The use of English as the language of technology, internet, communication, science and even most of humanities publications all over the world threatens and eliminates other languages’ status.

Language equality can be envisaged by the locus of ‘voice’. Voice "is the capacity to engage in socially 'placeable' communication, to produce a degree of isomorphism between projected 'meaning'…and granted 'meaning' " (Blommaert, 2005, p. 394). As such, voice is envisioned as one's desire to be heard or read. Moreover, inequality of languages can be represented by contrasts between the 'state' and other institutions. For instance, organizations of civil society will organize in contrast to the state. As it is known, the state is a central institution with specific depth and scope. It is the source of 'national' language as its 'central' value (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 396-397).

2.6 Lingua Franca, Standard Language and Official Language

There are three ways in which minority languages or varieties are legally suppressed. We use 'legally' to differentiate other types of suppression by force as it is the case of anti-Kurdish in Turkey. First, minority languages are eliminated by the need for a common language which is manipulated as a means of understanding in multilingual communities (Schilling, 2007: 1224). Moreover, Schilling (ibid.) elaborates on legal officialization explicating that

Comparative law therefore shows, it is submitted, that multilingual States with a lingua franca deem it sufficient to install the lingua franca — which they regularly have created themselves — as the only nationwide official language. In contrast, in States without a lingua franca, generally all major languages are nationwide official languages, certain restrictions being deemed acceptable for languages of very small minorities like Romansh in Switzerland or German in Belgium or the 13 languages not made into official languages in South Africa. In International Organisations, generally only a small number of languages is made into official languages, English and French being generally among them (p. 1224).

The second way of suppressing minority languages and varieties is by 'standardization'. Standard languages or dialects are claimed to be better, more prestigious, and more appropriate than other substandard varieties. These evaluations are not based on linguistic facts; rather they are the result of social attitudes in a given speech community (Trudgill, 1974; Meyerhoff, 2011, pp. 15-16).

The third way of suppression is achieved by selecting one language to be the 'official'
language of a state. Meyerhoff (2011, p. 293) asserts that official language is "[a] linguistic variety that has been designated as the medium for all official, government business. There is usually a right to have all legal and public services provided in an official language, and an obligation on state or regional authorities to satisfy this right". Thus, other minority languages will be eliminated by using one or two languages as a means of communication in official contexts. Their rights will be oppressed as good languages for communication.

2.7 Critical Linguistics and Language Policy

Language rights have been the focus of considerable research in critical linguistic studies. In this regard, critical studies deal with the interplay of notions like power, resistance, economics, knowledge, dialogue …etc. and language policy and education. Critical linguistics examines the social practice of the racist oppression of minority languages mainly in education. According to Baltodano (2005), "language policies should be examined as they are—ideological tools that shape the lives of linguistic minority communities and detrimental language policies are not natural, legal, unquestionable, or unchangeable" (p.176). As such, critical applied linguistics does not see linguistics as a theoretical abstract knowledge outside the domain of life, rather it envisions linguistics as an evaluator of the social change and its impact on the lives of individuals and groups.

Due to this, sociolinguists have eminently discussed the problem of language planning as a specific province of language policy. The need or language planning is crucial because there is no nation in the world that is totally monolingual. Thus, "even in communities or nations that embrace their multilingualism, issues of self-determination, identity and culture are central" (Meyerhoff, 2011, p.103); therefore, different problems and issues arise in communities when discussing how to choose a language to be the official or national language for the nation. Here, eliminating minority languages would be inevitable, as it is stated by Mesthrie (2001):

Confronted with many different languages within its boundaries, how does a state solve its communication problems, given the complexity of ethnolinguistic group relations? Historically, the state has imposed one language, usually the dominant legitimized language of the ruling group, upon the other linguistic groups, thus either reducing the latter's languages to minority status or eradicating them by assimilating its speakers through education or coercion (p. 20).

Similarly, Grin (2005, p. 448) assumes that we must develop our understanding of the nature of diversity-in-society. This diversity is best instantiated by linguistic diversity. Moreover, it is difficult to produce a complete treatment of such issues as diversity, policy and variation. He adds that a denial of one's language can be seen as a denial of his/her culture and identity. Major language users will save time and money since they do not need to learn a second language for the sake of education or getting a job. Thus, "the imposition of a dominant or majority language on others gives rise to potentially major inequalities. Their actual magnitude depends on the type and context of language dominance considered" (p. 455). This means that we are in need for a compromise or compensation that maintains the linguistic rights of minorities in language planning and policy. In addition, language planning is an
important motivation in the enhancement of language revitalization and validization programs "that meet the needs, goals and capacity of a language community. Language planning is most effective when the language community is included throughout the entire process, and when the focus is placed on the community, its speakers, and intergenerational transmission of the language" (Franks & Gessner; 2013, p. 11).

2.8 Language Legislation and Language Rights

Here, there are two extremes. One is to oppress the use of minority language in public and/or in private. Another is to learn more minority languages to be used even in official environments. Gibbons (1994, p. 293) presents several examples to illustrate the two extremes. There is a movement in the European Union which encourages the use of more languages in public- for example Catalan and Basque in Spain. On the other hand, there is a tendency in the USA to prevent the use of minority languages in public contexts. As such, there is a crucial conflict between keeping national unity and keeping minority language rights. All types of language oppression and elimination are considered as 'language crimes'. The aim of such 'crimes' is eliminate other identities, unity and culture. The aim is basically a political one. Some states oppress other minority languages because they are indicators of independence.

3. Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

The data of the current study are randomly selected parts of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (UDLR) in 1996. This declaration consists of preliminaries, a preamble, 51 articles, additional disposition, and final disposition. The analysis will be done on each one of these parts of the declaration. The method of analysis will be a qualitative critical discourse analysis of the data selected.

3.1 Analysis of Preliminaries

Data analysis shows that this part of the universal declaration focuses on the following aspects:

a. Relating the declaration of the linguistic rights to the international declaration of the human rights and other universal declarations, focusing on the rights of minorities:

(1) Having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which, in its preamble, expresses its (faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women; and which, in its second article, establishes that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status[...] adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UDLR, p. 17).

(2) Having regard to the Santiago de Compostela Declaration of the International PEN Club and the Declaration of 15 December 1993 of the Translations and Linguistic Rights Committee of the International PEN Club concerning the proposal to hold a World Conference on Linguistic Rights (UDLR, p. 17).
b. Criticizing the sources of language oppression and the exercise of power over the invaded countries.

(3) Considering that invasion, colonisation, occupation and other instances of political, economic or social subordination often involve the direct imposition of a foreign language or, at the very least, distort perceptions of the value of languages and give rise to hierarchical linguistic attitudes which undermine the language loyalty of speakers; and considering that the languages of some peoples which have attained sovereignty are consequently immersed in a process of language substitution as a result of a policy which favours the language of former colonial or imperial powers (UDLR, p. 18).

Here, one can notice the role of colonialism and imperialism in the lack

c. Referring to Chomsky's universalism to enhance the equality of all human beings in minds and languages (See Chomsky, 1965).

(4) Considering that universalism must be based on a conception of linguistic and cultural diversity which prevails over trends towards homogenization and towards exclusionary isolation (UDLR, p. 18).

d. Concentrating on the fact that language rights are just steps for international peace-making motivation. Thus, keeping human linguistic rights means keeping peace all over the globe.

(5) In the belief that a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights is required in order to correct linguistic imbalances with a view to ensuring the respect and full development of all languages and establishing the principles for a just and equitable linguistic peace throughout the world as a key factor in the maintenance of harmonious social relations (UDLR, p. 18).

3.2 Analysis of Preamble

The preamble is concerned with the following aspects:

a. The focus on the factors that play an important role in the formalization of language status and identity. Some of these reasons are social, linguistic and sociolinguistic ones.

(5) The situation of each language, in view of the foregoing considerations, is the result of the convergence and interaction of a wide range of factors of a political and legal, ideological and historical, demographic and territorial, economic and social, cultural, linguistic and sociolinguistic, interlinguistic and subjective nature. (UDLR, p. 18)

b. Linking economic freedom with the fight against inequality in the world at various levels: social, linguistic and cultural.

(6) The economicist growth model put forward by transnational economic groups which seeks to identify deregulation with progress and competitive individualism with freedom and generates serious and growing economic, social, cultural and linguistic inequality. (UDLR, p. 18)

c. Concentrating on the notion of speech communities rather than political factors such as states in the formulation of linguistic rights. Moreover, the declaration regards language
rights as a respect for other human rights, mutual communication and peaceful coexistence.

(7) For all these reasons, this Declaration takes language communities and not states as its point of departure and is to be viewed in the context of the reinforcement of international institutions capable of guaranteeing sustainable and equitable development for the whole of humanity. For these reasons also it aims to encourage the creation of a political framework for linguistic diversity based upon respect, harmonious coexistence and mutual benefit (UDLR, p. 19).

d. Formulating criteria for limiting and defining language community. This definition is geographically based with some reference to historical considerations.

(8) Groups are also deemed to be in their own territory and to belong to a language community in the following circumstances:

i. when they are separated from the main body of their community by political or administrative boundaries;

ii. when they have been historically established in a small geographical area surrounded by members of other language communities; or

iii. when they are established in a geographical area which they share with the members of other language communities with similar historical antecedents. (UDLR, p. 19)

3.3 Analysis of Articles

The formulation of articles represents the details of the declaration. Different articles have been devoted to different aspects of linguistic rights.

3.3.1 General Language Rights

The articles have a prologue of a general formalization of language rights. These include rights of expression, use, communication, socialization, linking language to culture and identity …etc.

the right to be recognized as a member of a language community;

(9) The right to the use of one's own language both in private and in public;

the right to the use of one's own name;

the right to interrelate and associate with other members of one's language community of origin;

the right to maintain and develop one's own culture;…

the right for their own language and culture to be taught;

the right of access to cultural services;

the right to an equitable presence of their language and culture in the communications media;
the right to receive attention in their own language from government bodies and in socioeconomic relations. (UDLR, p. 20)

3.3.2 Language Integration and Assimilation

One of the basic tenets of the declaration is that the processes of integration and assimilation with the host community or society should be natural and free without any type of enforcement or inducement. This is done to prohibit language oppression and suppression in all its kinds.

(10) This Declaration considers that persons who move to and settle in the territory of another language community have the right and the duty to maintain an attitude of integration towards this community. This term is understood to mean an additional socialization of such persons in such a way that they may preserve their original cultural characteristics while sharing with the society in which they have settled sufficient references, values and forms of behaviour to enable them to function socially without greater difficulties than those experienced by members of the host community. (UDLR, p. 20)

(11) This Declaration considers, on the other hand, that assimilation, a term which is understood to mean acculturation in the host society, in such a way that the original cultural characteristics are replaced by the references, values and forms of behaviour of the host society, must on no account be forced or induced and can only be the result of an entirely free choice. (UDLR, p. 21)

3.3.3 Legal and Official Linguistic Rights

The articles scurry to include several indications of the legal and official language rights such as official use of language, using language for legal and administrative purposes in public and private documents, receiving official documents in one's language, publishing all official laws and records in all languages of the historic status in the speech community. Some examples from the declaration are as follows:

(12) All language communities are entitled to the official use of their language within their territory.

All language communities have the right for legal and administrative acts, public and private documents and records in public registers (UDLR, p. 22).

(13) Forms and standard administrative documents, whether in printed, machine-readable or any other form, must be made available and placed at the disposal of the public in all territorial languages by the public authorities through the services which cover the territories to which each language is proper (UDLR, p. 22).

(14) Public authorities who have more than one territorially historic language within their jurisdiction must publish all laws and other legal provisions of a general nature in each of these languages, whether or not their speakers understand other languages (UDLR, p. 22).
3.3.4 Language Rights and Language Planning

One of the most important doctrines of the declaration is its focus on the arena of 'education' which is dealt with in sociolinguistic studies under the general head of language planning. Here are some instances of this concentration:

(15) Education must help to maintain and develop the language spoken by the language community of the territory where it is provided. (UDLR, p. 23)

(16) Education must always be at the service of linguistic and cultural diversity and of harmonious relations between different language communities throughout the world.

Within the context of the foregoing principles, everyone has the right to learn any language. (UDLR, p. 23)

(17) All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal all the human and material resources necessary to ensure that their language is present to the extent they desire at all levels of education within their territory: properly trained teachers, appropriate teaching methods, text books, finance, buildings and equipment, traditional and innovative technology.

Everyone is entitled to receive an education in the language proper to the territory where he/she resides. (UDLR, p. 23)

3.3.5 Language Rights in Communications, Media and Technology

The declaration emphasizes the significance of 'virtual' and electronic linguistic rights. In this respect, the locus of international and national communication media and new technologies has been concerned with the scope of language use in the media, relating cultural aspects with technology, freedom to get any type of information about culture or heritage through any type of communication, and the like. Here are some illustrative examples:

(18) All language communities have the right to decide the extent to which their language is be present in the communications media in their territory, whether local and traditional media, those with a wider scope, or those using more advanced technology, regardless of the method of dissemination or transmission employed (UDLR, p. 24).

(19) All language communities have the right to receive, through the communications media, a thorough knowledge of their cultural heritage (history, geography, literature and other manifestations of their own culture), as well as the greatest possible amount of information about any other culture their members may wish to know (UDLR, p. 24).

3.3.6 Language Rights and Culture-identification

The declaration draws a great deal of attention to the aspect of self-identification and linguistic acculturation. Remarkably, the focus has been on the fact that language is the mirror of culture and identity. One can reflect, exercise, identify, assert, reproduce and maintain his/her culture through his/her own language. Thus, there is a radical rejection of any kind of power or hegemony that may hinder this right.

(20) All language communities have the right to use, maintain and foster their language in all
forms of cultural expression.

All language communities must be able to exercise this right to the full without any community's space being subjected to hegemonic occupation by a foreign culture (UDLR, p. 25).

(21) All language communities have the right for the language proper to the territory to occupy a preeminent position in cultural events and services (libraries, videothèques, cinemas, theatres, museums, archives, folklore, cultural industries, and all other manifestations of cultural life) (UDLR, p. 25).

3.3.7 Language Rights in the Socioeconomic Sphere

The declaration sheds the light on the socioeconomic status of languages. This is fostered by the focus on the right of communities to use their own languages in all types of activities in social and economic contexts. The following instances illustrate these rights:

(22) All language communities have the right to establish the use of their language in all socioeconomic activities within their territory.

The use of other languages in this sphere can only be required in so far as it is justified by the nature of the professional activity involved. In no case can a more recently arrived language relegate or supersede the use of the language proper to the territory (UDLR, p. 26).

(23) All language communities have the right for their language to occupy a pre-eminent place in advertising, signs, external signposting, and in the image of the country as a whole.

Everyone has the right to use the language proper to the territory in his/her relations with firms, commercial establishments and private bodies and to be served or receive a reply in the same language (UDLR, p. 26).

3.4 Analysis of the Dispositions

These dispositions are methodic and organizational. They set some proposals and recommendations for the UN and other international organizations to take the declaration into account with establishing a Council of Languages within the United Nations Organization and "a World Commission on Linguistic Rights, a non-official, consultative body made up of representatives of non-governmental organizations and other organizations working in the field of linguistic law" (UDLR, p. 27). The important point here is that the declaration motivates the establishment of organizations and laws the support human linguistic rights.

3.5 Discussion

It is of value to assert that the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights has been successful in viewing the nature of language in society. It has been based on the critical view of modern sociolinguistics. Unlike traditional sociolinguists, the compilers of this declaration believe that language does not reflect identity, but it does constitute our identity. It is a crucial fact that who we are depends on, how we act and not vice versa (May, 2005a). Moreover, language dominance should be replaced by language management and natural assimilation.
Dominance and power are key terms in language rights. Phillipson (1992) states that the dominance of English represents a linguistic imperialism that threatens the existence of other languages. Globalization can be envisioned as a tremendous reason for the enhancement of the spreading socio-economic status of English. Globalization refers to "the expansion of trade and other economic relationships across international borders...English is the language most often associated with globalization, from McDonalds to Coke, from dollars to movies, from pop music to computers" (Curzan & Adams, 2009, p. 490).

The declaration sees that aspects like language, power, gender and identity are interlinked in a wide sphere to many cultural contexts. This reflects the importance of analyzing the ideologies behind selecting one language rather than another to be the official, standard dialect or the language of education (Norton, 2000).

Social equality and justice are affirmed by the declaration. This equality is achieved through the freedom of using one's language in all aspects of life, socially, culturally and personally. This is important in bilingual and multilingual communities. As Walsh (1991, pp. 127-128) envisions, bilingualism is not to have the ability to manipulate two or more languages, but to be aware of the socio-cultural, ideological and political values and backgrounds of in which each language is manifested and positioned.

The problem of ethnicity has been addressed by the declaration. However, it does not give a precise definition for it. There are two ways of viewing ethnic membership. The first is cognitive in nature since it views ethnic group identification as a type of self-ascription. It depends on the internal contents or elements of the group. The second view is the anthropological one which sees ethnicity as a type of setting boundaries within societies. An ethnic group starts when the other ends (Anderson, 1991, p. 20). The problem with the declaration is that it takes language community for granted, at least depending on the geographical criterion.

Another problem with the declaration is its focus on the right for language use in one's territory. What about using language outside one's country or provision? What about using language in international and national conferences? What about using language in Diasporas communities in emigrational contexts? Although language diversity is inevitable, this is not a plea for language oppression or elimination.

The declaration fails to address the linguistic rights at the level of dialects and accents. For instance, considering African American English as lower that White or Standard American English is a prominent issue. There is a tendency in US to lower the Black thought by lowering the Black languages and dialects (Davies, 2007, p. 157).

The declaration has been hesitant in addressing concrete international examples of language inequality and oppression as in Turkey, USA, Sri Lanka, Serbia, Africa and the like (Canagarajah, 1993).

There is no reference to religious considerations and managements that limits the use of some local languages in services and prayers. These are based on different regards (Wei and Cook, 2009).
4. Concluding Remarks

The current study has come up with some important concluding remarks. For instance, the universal declaration of linguistic rights is based on the human language rights hypothesis with some reference to the minority hypothesis. The factors that have been addressed are power, dominance, inequality, culture, and identity. Moreover, Language is seen as constituting rather than reflecting identity. The declaration treats important issues in language rights in several domains such as education, communication, politics, socio-economics, technology and public speech. Language communities are defined in terms of historical and geographical criteria. In addition, the declaration admits language diversity but fights language inequality.

However, the main problems in this declaration is that it does not refer to dialectal rights and does not define ethnic group in a clear way. There is no reference to the imperial linguistic impact of English over other languages. The declaration has been hesitant in addressing concrete international examples of language inequality and oppression as in Turkey, USA, Seri Lanka, Serbia, Africa and the like. Finally, there is no reference to religious considerations and managements that limit the use of some local languages in services and prayers. These are based on different regards.

Acknowledgement

The research is financed by the University of Babylon.

References


mothertongue-based multilingual education -or linguistic genocide, crimes against humanity and an even faster destruction of biodiversity and our planet. *Keynote presentation at Bamako International Forum on Multilingualism*. Bamako, Mali.


