



**The Linguistic and Cultural Situation among the Sabian  
Mandaean in Baghdad: A Sociolinguistic Study**

**الوضع اللغوي والثقافي للصابئة المندائيين في بغداد**

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### Authorization

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## Dedication

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By  
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**Abstract**

This study aims to investigate the linguistic and cultural situation among the Sabian Mandaean of Baghdad. The study attempts to examine the domains of the use of Mandaic and Arabic and to explore the cultural features that they have maintained in the Baghdad community. It also seek to explore the factors that led them to lose their ethnic language. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher gathered information by using three instruments; community profile, interview, and a sociolinguistic questionnaire. The sample of the study consisted of 70 participants and five interviewees from the Mandaean community.

Results indicate that the Sabian Mandaean of Baghdad are witnessing a shift towards the majority language "Arabic". They use Arabic almost in all domains. Mandiac language is used by Mandaean clergymen during the religious rituals. Results also show that the Sabian Mandaean are aware of the Mandaean culture. The cultural elements which they preserved are religious rituals; costumes; food and Mandaean celebrations. The study concluded that lack of interest in the Mandaean language and lack of using their language at home and among family members along with other domains such as school, work, and media were the major factors that helped in losing their ethnic language.

**Keywords:** Cultural Situation, Sabian, Mandaean, Baghdad

## الوضع الثقافي واللغوي للصائبية المندائيين في بغداد

إعداد معلم العبيدي

بإشراف الدكتورة نورما الزايد

### ملخص الرسالة

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة الوضع اللغوي والثقافي لدى الصائبية المندائيين القاطنين في بغداد. وقامت باستكشاف المجالات التي يستخدم فيها الصائبية المندائيون كلاً من اللغتين المندائية والعربية. وتناولت أيضاً العناصر الثقافية التي حافظوا عليها في بغداد وسعت أيضاً إلى استكشاف العوامل التي ساعدت في التخلّي عن لغتهم العرقية. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة جمعت الباحثة المعلومات بثلاث وسائل، بناءً لمحه مختصرة عن مجتمع الدراسة، وإجراء مقابلات، وتصميم إستبانة لغوية اجتماعية. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 70 مشاركاً وخمسة من الذين أجريت معهم مقابلات من المجتمع المندائي. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن الصائبية المندائيين في بغداد يشهدون تحولاً نحو لغة الأغلبية "العربية". حيث تستخدم اللغة العربية في جميع المجالات تقريباً. بينما تستخدم اللغة المندائية فقط من قبل رجال الدين المندائيين خلال الطقوس الدينية. كما، أظهرت النتائج أن الصائبية المندائيين لم يحافظوا على لغتهم العرقية. ولكنهم حافظوا على بعض عناصر الثقافة المندائية مثل الطقوس الدينية والملابس والغذاء والاحتفالات المندائية. وقد أثبتت النتائج أن عدم الاهتمام باللغة المندائية وعدم استعمالها في مجالات متعددة مثل البيت وبين الأقارب وفي مجالات أخرى كالمدارس وأماكن العمل ووسائل الإعلام والمنزل، والأسرة ساعدت على فقدانهم لغتهم العرقية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الوضع الثقافي، الصائبية، المندائيين، بغداد

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0. Background of the Study

#### 1.1. Introduction

Linguists are very much interested in studying small ethnic languages around the world because they are on the way to vanishing under the pressure of the immigrating intrusive languages. When an ethnic language comes in contact with an immigrating language, this will either lead to weakening this ethnic language or keeping it alive.

Fishman (1989) elaborates that "languages in contact" may be summed up in three different results: The first result is that the immigrant language after one generation or so, loses ground under the pressure of the host language such as the European languages that immigrated to the United States. The second result happens when the intrusive immigrant language takes over the host language like the case of Arabic which actually originated from the Arabian Peninsula and took over other local languages like the Roman, the Greek, and many others. The third result happens when the immigrant language survives and is used side by side with the host language, where each language has its own domain of use and each group has its own way of life, such as the situation of Chechen and Arabic in Jordan where both are used daily, but each one has its use.

The Sabian Mandaeans who are the subject of this research belong to the indigenous ethnic and religious people of Iraq. They are the oldest religious sect that still exists in limited numbers in the territories of southern Iraq. Their religion is one of the oldest monotheistic religions in the Middle East. It follows the teachings of John the Baptist, and baptism is its central ritual.

There are many views about their origin: Günduz (1994) argues that their origin is traced back to the Levant area (Jordan/Palestine) where they were originated from and had left it later with their families to Mesopotamia (recent Iraq). Other scholars who are interested in biblical studies like Luperie (1997) and Yamauchi (2004) argue persuasively against the theory of Palestinian origin of the Mandaeans, favoring an origin of Mesopotamia, likely in the late second or early third century A.D.

After the advent of Islam in the seventh century, the name “Sabians” (Arabic Sabi-ah or Subba'h) come to be applied together with the word (Mandaeans) to them. Rudolph (2008) states that the Mandaeans are still known as such throughout much of the Middle East. The Mandaeans know that the two criteria of a holy book and a prophet are essential for acknowledgment as a “People of the Book” (Ahl al-Kitab), that is, a legal minority religion, and they appeal to this. He also mentioned that this term was known from the Qur·ān (2:62, 5:69, and 22:17) and early Arabic

literature. This designation enables them to belong to the “people of the book” who are tolerated by Islam.

The word Mandaean refers to their distinct Aramaic language, which is one of the ancient languages which were used daily side by side with other languages in Mesopotamia such as the Nabatean, the Babylonian, and the Akkadian and were very similar to the Mandaean until it became weak and dwindled gradually when the Arabic language became dominant after the Islamic conquest of the land. According to the United States Commission on international Religious Freedom (USCIRF) (2007) the Sabian Mandaeism, like most religions, emphasizes marriage, family, and peaceful coexistence with other groups. They believe in total equality between men and women and has a pacifist doctrine. Carrying any weapon is a major sin in Mandaeanism.

To study a language one needs to investigate its culture because language and culture cannot be separated especially in studies related to ethnic communities. Language and culture are considered two sides of the same coin. There are many aspects of the Mandaean culture that need to be investigated such as food, dressing, social and religious rituals, celebrations and festivals, values and rules of behaviors, etc.

Thus the researcher investigated the status of language and culture together among the Sabian Mandaeans.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

When two languages and their cultures are in contact, a conflict may arise. Results of this conflict may influence the ethnic language and its culture particularly if it deals with the small population of speakers. This study examined language and cultural statuses among the Mandaean of Baghdad.

## **1.4 Questions of the Study**

This study raises the following questions:

- 1- What are the linguistic and cultural statuses among the Sabian Mandaean of Baghdad?
- 2- What are the factors that have either led them to preserve their cultural features or losing their language?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to investigate

- 1- The linguistic and cultural statuses among the Sabian Mandaeans in Baghdad.
- 2- The factors that have either led to the preservation or loss of their language and culture.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Few studies have dealt with the Mandaean people in Baghdad. Therefore, this study which investigated the Mandaean language and cultural situation may fill the gap and help other researchers in the future. This study might be of interest to researchers in sociolinguistics, ethnolinguistics and other relevant fields.

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The study is limited to the instruments and sample used by the researcher and results can't be generalized to all the Mandaeans of Iraq.

### **1.7 Limits of the study**

The study was conducted in Amman and Baghdad during the first semester 2016-2017.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

**Cultural situation:** Theoretically, Gaber (2005, P.17) defines culture as "A manifestations of life of a group of people who live in a place and have the same language, beliefs, costumes, traditions, and history". Operationally, it indicates the social and cultural features of Mandaean life in Baghdad as represented in their entertainments, arts, history, food, dressing, rituals and their behaviors in different social situations.

**Linguistic situation:** Theoretically, Ferguson (1971, P.1) defines it as "the total configuration of languages use at a time and place, including data such as how many and what kind of language are spoken in the area by how many people, under what circumstances". Operationally, it refers to the Mandaean language and culture as used by the Sabian Mandaeans who live in Baghdad.

**Sabian Mandaeans:** Theoretically, "they are the oldest religious sect that still exists in limited numbers in the border territories of southern Iraq", Abadirad (2013, P.165). Operationally, it refers to the community of Baghdad and can be defined as people whose ancestors lived in the southern of Iraq. They have their distinctive language and culture.

## Chapter Two

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents theoretical and empirical studies related to the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad, language shift, and cultural preservation.

### **2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature**

#### **2.1.1 The Historical and Cultural Background of the Sabian**

##### **Mandaeans of Baghdad**

Buckley (2002) and Günduz (1994) argue that the origin of the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad is traced back to the Levant area (Jordan/Palestine/Syria) where they originated from and had left it later with their families to migrate to Mesopotamia (recent Iraq).

Lupieri (2008) and Yamauchi (2004) argue persuasively against the theory of Palestinian origin of Mandaeans, favoring an origin of Mesopotamia, likely in the late second or early third century A.D. The basis of their arguments is the dependence of Mandaean legends upon both Jewish and Christian traditions.

Häberl (2013) traces the historical background for Sabian Mandaeans which started prior to the advent of Islam until now. He also traces the strategies that the Sabian Mandaeans had to preserve their traditions, beliefs and religious practices throughout many centuries in spite

of the long contact with other communities whether minority or majority under different ruling powers.

According to the Mandaean Associations Union (2009), the Sabian Mandaeans faced several persecutions and other discrimination acts through many centuries. This caused dwindling their number in the area first by the hands of Sassanians in 273, where the Zoroastrianism was their main faith, and many Mandaean priests were executed including their higher priest Mani, besides, many other non-Zoroastrian adherents were suppressed as well such as Christians; Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists.

According to Buckley (2002) during those years of Persian rule, the evidence of existential Mandaean religion was not recorded in the history and had faded from the early third century to the seventh century when the Muslim Arabs emerged in the region. The Mandaeans took the status of (the people of the book) by the Muslims who show of tolerance to Mandaeans and in this period, Buckley (2002, p.5). States, "the Mandaeans appear to succeed, for religion flourishes, with intense activity. Mandaean texts are collected, compared, and consolidated as conscientious leaders among the priestly copyists exert themselves to weed out local variations in ritual texts".

Smith (2016) states that in the 1830s the Mandaeans who resided in the areas of Iraq and Iran were afflicted with a great plague. Cholera

epidemic spread wide among the Sabian Mandaean community and caused many deaths of their priests and decreased largely the number of the Mandaean population. Smith (2016, p. 46) estimates that "just 1,500 Mandaicans were left. Bear in mind that modern population estimates are usually between 70,000 to 100,000, although some sources claim that there are only 30,000 Mandaicans".

Al-Majidi (1997) suggests that the Sabian religion started from the secret places of the Sumerian religion. He thinks that the Mandaean Sabian religion first appeared from within the secret growth and development of the Sumerian religion under the domination of a net of new Akkadian and Babylonian beliefs. He regards the Sumerianism as the origin of the Sabian religion. Sabian religion lived with Islam for over thousands of years in the Iraqi cities of Aumara, Nassyria, Basrah and Ahwaz (Southern of Iraq) and from which it took most of its religious and folkloric customs due to communication with Muslims.

Abadirald (2013) reports that their religion is one of the oldest monotheistic religions in the Middle East. It is independent of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It follows the teachings of John the Baptist; baptism being its central ritual.

Lupieri (2008) and Drower (2002) state that the main characteristic of the Mandaean religion is the frequent ritual use of (running) water for baptisms and immersion in flowing water as ritual purifications.

Deutsch (2007) identifies their religion as old as Christianity and mentions that after the arrival of Europeans to the area they mistakenly classified them as the 'Christian of St. the Baptist' because of their veneration to John the Baptist.

Buckley (2002) shows in his book the religious background of Sabian Mandaeans extensively. He refers to the Mandaeans as the only 'Gnostic' religious group among other late antiquity Gnostics that died out or were overrun long ago and the Mandaeans persisted to stay alive. He states that the Mandaeans "continue to practice intricate rituals whose precise origins and antecedents are difficult to determine" p. (7). He states that their religion has mythological and mysterious ritual traditions. He adds that they have a unique outspread religious texts and literature that included a varied mythological tradition and intricate rituals that are practiced nowadays. Their main holy book is called (Ginza Reba) which means "treasure" and it was "transcribed by Mandaean priests and the work was separated by right and left side" p.(10). Other religious books besides (Ginza) are the book of John, the book of Zodiac, ritual commentaries and the book of Astrology.

## **2.1.2 The Religious and Current Cultural Background of the Sabian Mandaean**

According to AINA (Assyrian International News Agency), the number of the Mandaean is around fifty thousand at the present time. Their decreased numbers are due to continued persecution and forced mass conversions as well as relocation and assimilation.

The Mandaean marriage ceremony is the most distinctive cultural feature that distinguishes Mandaean community among other ethnic groups from all over the world.

It is worth mentioning that most of the Mandaean rituals are mainly linked to the water which is usually connected to a live river on the ground. That's reflected clearly in their wedding rituals; both partners are supposed to finalize the wedding at the river bank in Baghdad particularly at the bank of "Dijla" (Tigris) river. They need to create a temporary room "Andiruna" (reed hut) for each marriage ceremony in the bank river and supposed to be made from sugarcane where the two married couple gets inside of it. Using this kind of plant is connected to the power of male according to their religious beliefs. They are used to make a crown made from 'Alieas or klila' ( Myrtus plant) for the bride. They always prepare a large plate which should be set in front of the couples and it is decorated with different kinds of desserts, candles and a small mirror erected in the plate in front of the

bride to look at herself (an obligatory ritual) supposing that her beauty and youth will last and her life will be happy. The bride and groom should eat dry bread in the ceremony. Lighting candles should be set starting from sunrise until sundown during the marriage ceremony. Their marriage is always held on Sundays only (Personal communication, 2016).

According to their point of view, they feel that what makes them Mandaean is their religion and their rituals which have been inherited and preserved for thousands of years and still practiced today. They think that their religion is the main reason that makes their stock preserved and they feel the pride of being Mandaean. Additionally, they claim that they have the same ancestral stock and share a common language, religion, culture, land, and national trends and issues.

The Mandaean are known to prepare in a special way (a spiced duck) which is cooked by boiling and frying the duck in a pan using seven spices. The duck is a favorite Mandaean food to eat in the community. They cook it in a way that is quite different from other nations and it is eaten sometimes several times a week.

According to the interviews held by the researcher with a number of community members, all the Mandaean religious and social celebrations are closely connected to their religious beliefs. They are rooted in their traditions that have been followed for over thousands of years ago.

According to the holy book of Mandaeans "Ganza Ruba" (Great Treasure) they have four major religious celebrations : Small Eid (DhvHuneina) which is only one day, Creation Eid (Albenjh Brunia) which is also called the spring festival; Peace Eid (Hichlam usury) in which they serve different types of sweets and fresh fruits, candles stay lit day and night , and (Garsa) a celebration which they believe is the day in which the world was created and the time that human beings were created and began. This celebration is very distinct compared to other ones because they have to lock their doors, windows and close the taps. They are not allowed to get out of the house for 36 hours. During the 36 hours they are not allowed to be bleeding or touching any living thing or anyone, otherwise, they will sit out of the rest of the ceremony.

The Sabian- Mandaeans have one major place for worship which is (Mandi) located in middle of Baghdad in Al-Qadisiya district near Tigris (Dijlah) River. Mandi is known to be the main Mandaean worship place just like a church, mosque or temple. They frequently attend and practice their worship and prayers and hold religious celebrations there. Another place that the Sabian Mandaean visit for their religious and social events is AL-Shareah located in Al-Jaderya district eastern Baghdad.

Most of their rituals involve frequent immersion of running water, that's why their worship house is always located besides running water. All

the religious and social celebrations and festivals are held and shared among families and neighbors of Sabian Mandaean community mainly at Mandi. They also practice their religious rituals at AL-Sharee'a. Also, they have Maarefa house (Knowledge house) which is an extension house for Mandi.

### **2.1.3 Theoretical Literature Related to Language Contact, Language Shift, and Maintenance.**

According to Dil and Fishman (1972, p.76) the study of language maintenance and language shift is concerned with

"The relationship between change (or stability) in language usage patterns, on the one hand, and ongoing psychological, cultural or cultural processes, on the other hand, in populations that utilize more than one speech variety for intra-group or for Inter-group purposes".

Weinreich (1974) has elaborated on the effect of bilingualism on a language contact situation. He also clarifies the role of the socio-cultural setting of language contact saying "when a language-contact situation is examined in detail, the interrelation of socio-cultural conditions and linguistic phenomena is apparent" (p.83). He mentions some elements that play a vital role in the choice of bilingual groups in making the language dominant for them, determined by social and linguistic habits, such aspects are the usefulness of a language and its role in social advance.

Spolsky (1998) states that the term language situation generally refers to the languages and language varieties that are used by a group of people within a particular region in different domains and their attitudes toward this language or languages. Bilingualism and Multilingualism arise as a result of language contact. He assumes that the simplest definition of a bilingual is a person who has some functional ability in a second language.

Ferguson (1981) describes language maintenance as "the preservation of the use of a language by a speech community under conditions where there is a possibility of a shift to another language" (p.530). On the other hand, he defines language shift as "the change in regular use or mother-tongue status of one language to another in a speech community"(p.530).

Fishman (1991) indicates that language shift is a "process whereby intergenerational continuity of the heritage language is proceeding negatively, with fewer 'speakers, readers, writers, and even understands every generation.'" (p.1)

Downes (1998) discusses the language shift and language death; he states that:

"In situations of unstable bilingualism when certain social conditions obtain, languages can become the mother tongues of shrinking speech communities. He has also shed light on a number of ways in which a language can vanish; he has explained that a language could be lost in cases of massacre, or if this language is repressed. He also suggested that the most common situation of language loss is gradual language loss; in which a population shifts languages over generations." (p.27).

Druviet (2000) explains that the term Language Situation involves three main categories of changeable factors: speaker, language, and setting which are connected with many parameters, such as: language status in the country, sociolinguistic functions of the languages, in other words, the domains that each language has been used in, and the linguistic quality of languages.

#### **2.1.4 Theoretical Literature Related to Culture**

Newmark (1988) believes that "culture is the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression. More specifically, he distinguishes 'cultural from 'universal and personal language." (p. 94). He also discusses cultural elements such as, (1) ecological: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills (2) material culture (artifacts):(a) food(b) clothes(c) houses and towns (d) transport, (3) social culture - work and leisure , social events, folklore. (4) Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, (a) political and administrative :(b) religion(c) artistic. (5) Gestures and habits, greetings.

Matsumoto (1996) states that culture is "the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next." ( p . 16) Every culture is unique with its own traditions and findings.

Myers-Scotton (2006, P.90) explains the following societal, in-group and individual elements that are central to language and culture preservation:

1. Demographic factors – large numbers of speakers of the same ethnic language living together;
2. Occupational factors – working with fellow speakers of the ethnic language, with restrictive socio-economic mobility;
3. Educational factors – e.g. official provision of the ethnic language as a medium of instruction;
4. Social networks and group attitudes about the ethnic language as an ethnic symbol;
5. Psychological attachment to the ethnic language for self-identity.

## **2.2 Review of Empirical Studies**

### **2.2.1 Empirical Studies Related to Language Contact, Language Shift and cultural Preservation**

Dashti (2004) investigated the language status among the Kuwaiti Ajams. The study aimed to examine the situation of Kuwaiti Ajams ethnic language. The researcher used participants' observation and ethnographic recorded conversations as instruments to gather data. The findings exposed that the grandchildren's generation of the two families has shifted from Farsi to Arabic because various elements like migration, religion, and intermarriages which are relatively important.

Alzoubi ( 2007 ) investigated the language and cultural maintenance among the Druze of Jordan. The study aimed to investigate the factors that contributed to language and culture preservation. Data were provided by personal observation, personal interviews and a questionnaire that covered domains of language use, language proficiency. The results of the study that the Druze of Jordan preserved their dialect within the Druze social encounters, beside they were proficient in the Bedouin dialect with different usage among females. Regarding cultural preservation, it was noted that religious and social isolation, internal marriages played a vital role in cultural maintenance.

Ortman and Stevens (2008) conducted a study on language shift among inter and intra-generations of the Hispanic Americans. Data were

provided by the surveys of the CPS (civilian public service) as it keeps information for all generations. Results referred to a shift in Spanish in the American status after the first generation.

Chiro and Mintstud (2008) examined the cultural identity of a group of students of Italian ancestry from the third generation in Australia. The methodology used to collect the data was analyzing memories or personal narratives gathered from several interviews and participant observation. Results indicated that the Druze in South Australia maintained many cultural values and traditions such as family and marriage values.

Kittaneh (2009) investigated the language situation among the Arab Palestinians of 1948. The researcher distributed a sociolinguistic questionnaire among a sample of 70 Palestinian Arabs of 1948 to explore their use of language and attitudes towards Arabic and Hebrew. The researcher found that the indigenous language (Arabic) was used side by side with the intrusive language (Hebrew).

Nofal (2011) investigated the language situation among the Indians of Yemen. Information was collected through a questionnaire. Findings showed that some of them still preserve the Indian ethnic languages. It also focused on the Indians have good command in the Indian native language skills, especially in speaking and listening.

Al-Obaidi (2012) examined the Neo-Aramaic language of the Chaldo-Assyrians in Baghdad. The researcher chose a sample of 135 Chaldo-Assyrian from different ages, gender, and educational background. Information was collected by means of a community profile, interviews, and a questionnaire. The questionnaire contained four sections: demographic data, domains of language use, language attitudes, and factors that support using Syriac. The findings of her study revealed that the Assyrians revealed positive attitudes towards their ethnic language and use Arabic when necessary.

Glasgow (2012) explored the Croatian language and cultural maintenance in Kansas. The sample of the study consisted of 20 participants. Data were collected by structured interviews using Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS, Lewis, and Simons (2010). Results of the study indicated that the first wave of immigrants had no proficiency in the Croatian language. On the other hand, the second wave showed high levels of bilingualism. On A cultural level, they maintained some aspects from the Croatian culture such as food, greetings, and music.

Al-Khatib and Al-Ali (2013) examined the language and cultural maintenance among the Gypsies of Jordan. The researchers used a questionnaire and interviews in order to collect data. The study concluded

that the Gypsies of Jordan used their language in social domains. In addition, they also preserved their culture because they could not profit incoming to the majority-group culture.

Dweik and Al-Refa'I (2015) investigated the sociolinguistic background of the Assyrians of Jordan. It also attempted to explore the domains of use of Syriac and Arabic. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a purposive sample of 56 respondents, covering different age ranges, genders, and educational backgrounds, was chosen to respond to the linguistic questionnaire. The instruments of the study were open-ended interviews and a sociolinguistic questionnaire. The overall analysis of the questionnaire and the interviews indicated that the Assyrians of Jordan were witnessing a shift from their ethnic language (i.e., Syriac) towards the majority language (i.e. Arabic). They consciously placed more importance on Arabic which enabled them to be assimilated into the mainstream society. The assimilation was driven by a variety of factors such as seeking security in the society as a result of what they have witnessed in their original regions. Furthermore, the Assyrians of Jordan used Arabic in almost all domains. However, results proved that Syriac was still minimally used in certain key domains such as at home with family members and at church. This shift was the result of historical, economic, demographic, linguistic and generational distance.

Dweik and Omar (2015) investigated the cultural elements that the Circassians of New Jersey have preserved after being in the State of New Jersey for more than 80 years. It also sought to reveal the factors that assisted them in preserving some of the Circassian cultural aspects. The researchers used a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative research methods to collect and analyze the data. A sample of 40 participants was chosen conveniently on the basis of availability to respond to the sociolinguistic questionnaire in addition to holding open-ended interviews with another 10 participants. Results showed awareness to the Circassian culture and its bountiful facets along with high appreciation to the American culture. The cultural elements that are mainly preserved were food, folklore, music, and Circassian celebrations. On the other hand, they preserved “Adiga Xabza” which is a group of socially refined manners that are based on respect, honor, hospitality, responsibility, self-control, discipline and good character which is passed naturally to generations. Historical awareness was only concerned with major historical events that mainly reflected the suffering of their ancestors. The role of the Circassian associations was essential. Home and family were major factors that helped in maintaining some of the cultural elements.

### **2.3 Summary**

This chapter has shed light on some theoretical literature that covers the Sabian Mandaeans historical and religious background and discusses language contact, language shift and cultural preservation among communities with ethnic belonging in the Middle East and the globe. The chapter has also described empirical studies that are connected to the same issues. This review of the literature has helped the researcher in paving the way for the methodology chapter which is coming next.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Method and Procedures**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the method and research design; elaborates on the population and sample of the study along with the instruments used and illustrates the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. It concludes with statistical analysis and procedures of the study.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The researcher utilizes qualitative and quantitative research design, in collecting and analyzing the data.

#### **3.2. Population and Sample of the Study:**

The population of the study includes most of Sabian-Mandaeans citizens who live in Baghdad. From this population, a sample of 70 Sabians were chosen purposively. The participants were both males and females of different ages and social backgrounds. Two sampling procedures were used in selecting the respondents such as the 'snowball' sampling which was particularly used in the interviews. Members of the community were asked to suggest names of other members be approached. Another sampling technique was used for the distribution of the sociolinguistic questionnaire. The researcher accessed members of the community by using the 'social

network' type followed by Milroy and Milroy (1978). It enabled the researcher to approach the participants through a third party. Four Mandaeans assisted the researcher in the procedures of the distribution and gathering the sociolinguistic questionnaire from different as neighbours, friends, and relatives.

The sample comprised demographic variables i.e. different age, gender, occupations, and marital status as well as linguistic and community background as Table (1) below illustrates it.

**Table (1): Distribution of the Participants as Per Their Demographic Data**

<b>Distribution of the sample by age and gender</b>					
<b>Age</b>		<b>Gender</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Males No.</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Female s No.</b>	<b>100%</b>
10-19	5	2	3	3	5
20-39	32	10	15	22	31
40-59	21	9	12	12	17
60 and above	12	7	10	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Distribution of the sample by the place of birth</b>					
<b>Education</b>		<b>No.</b>	<b>100%</b>		
Baghdad		65	93%		
Other Iraqi City		5	7%		
Foreign Country		-	-		
<b>Total number of the participants</b>		70	100%		
<b>Distribution of the sample by the marital status</b>					
<b>Marital Status</b>		<b>No.</b>	<b>100%</b>		
Single		23	33%		
Engaged		12	18%		
Married		33	47%		
Other		2	2%		
<b>Total number of the participants</b>		70	100%		

<b>Distribution of the sample by educational level</b>		
<b>Education</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>100%</b>
Primary School	0	0%
Middle School	2	2%
Secondary School	5	10%
Two-Year Diploma	5	10%
Four-Year B.A. Degree	33	49%
M.A. Degree or Equivalent	13	20%
Ph.D. Degree or Equivalent	6	9%
<b>Total number of the participants</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Distribution of the sample by professional background</b>		
<b>Professional Background</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>100%</b>
Business	4	6%
Education	2	2%
Medical field	10	15%
Legal services	2	2%
Media field	-	0%
Student	22	33%
Handicraft	15	22%
Other	2	2%
Unemployed	13	18%
<b>Total number of the participants</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

### **3.3 The Instruments of the Study:**

The study uses three instruments in collecting the data. These are community profile, a sociolinguistic questionnaire, and interviews with a selected number of Mandaean.

#### **3.3.1. Community Profile**

The researcher collected information about the topic from different sources such as articles, books, journals, interviews of some members of the community and official documents that were available from different

universities i.e. the University of Jordon as well as from different interviewees.

A pilot questionnaire was used for establishing the community. It contained 8 open-ended questions dealing with their community as suggested by Wolck (1972), Dweik (2000), Al-Obaidy (2013) and Al-Refa'i (2013). (see appendix A, P.50)

### **3.3.2 The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed specifically to meet the objectives of the study. It was based on parallel previous questionnaires formed by researchers who examined ethnic groups in the Middle East and in the West such as Fishman (1966), Dweik (2000), Al-Obaidy (2013), Nofal (2011), Kondakov (2011).

The questionnaire consisted of several dimensions; the first section of the questionnaire included demographic data that represented the social and the linguistic background of the participants such as the level of education, marital status, age, sex and the language of the parents. (See page 24)

The second section examined the domains of language use. Seven domains were listed i.e. the neighborhood, place of worship, school, work, home and family and media. The participants were asked to select the

suitable answer from the following options: a) Only Mandaean, b) only Arabic, or c) Arabic and Mandaean

The family and home section contained seven different family members such as communicating with mother, father, meetings family, brothers, sisters etc... Five items focused on language use in the workplace, the place of worship, the neighbourhood and the school or university.

The third section investigated the Sabian Mandaean cultural features that are being preserved. Cultural features that were examined include their food, costumes, traditions, marriage customs, religious celebrations and social festivals as well as their life style.

The fourth section of the questionnaire was concerned with the elements that helped them in preserving their culture. This section comprised 9 statements which sought the respondents' level of agreement and disagreement about the elements which influenced their cultural preservation based on a Likert scale with six items. (See appendix B, P.55)

### **3.3.3 Interviews**

The researcher conducted semi-formal interviews with key personalities such as social leaders and religious figures for the purpose of answering the questions of the study.

The interview instrument was based on unstructured open-ended interviews. The questions focused on the cultural elements and factors that were responsible for preserving their culture . Other questions dealt with the factors that have led to lose their language. Some of the interviews were held via Viber, emails, phone calls and Skype. (See Appendix C, P.64)

### **3.4 Validity of the Questionnaire**

The researcher asked a panel of experts who have experience in teaching Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics to comment on the questionnaire and to find out if the items of the questionnaire measure what they were supposed to measure.The professors were asked to give their comments, recommendations, and useful suggestions. (See Appendix D, P.67)

### **3.5 Reliability of the Questionnaire**

The test-retest instrument was utilized by the researcher to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. Some participants who were not part of the sample were chosen to respond to the questionnaire. Two weeks later, the same questionnaire was introduced again and the results were stable.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment**

Findings of the sociolinguistic questionnaire were classified and analyzed using tables that contain percentages and frequencies. The results of the open-ended interviews were described and narrated as reported by the interviewees.

### **3.7 Procedures of the Study:**

The researcher executed the following procedures:

1. Surveying the theoretical literature and the empirical studies that are related to this study.
2. Preparing three instruments: a community profile, questionnaire, and interviews.
3. Presenting the questionnaire to a group of experts to comment on its validity and reliability.
4. Getting a permission letter from the university to facilitate the researcher's mission.
5. Performing the questionnaires and conducting the interviews.
6. Analyzing the data and reporting the results.
7. Discussing the findings in the light of the reviewed literature.
8. Introducing a conclusion and making suggestions for further research.
9. Writing references according to the APA style.
10. Attaching appendices if necessary.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results of the Study**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides answers to the following questions:

- 1- What are the linguistic and cultural statuses among the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad?
- 2- What are the factors that have either led them to preserve their cultural features or lose their language?

#### **4.1 Results Related to the First Question:**

The first question of this study is “*What are the linguistic and cultural statuses among the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad?*”

This question focuses on lanuage proficiency and language use in different domains among them. It attempts to find how proficient they are in Mandiac and Arabic.

Table (2) below indicates the proficiency of Sabians Mandaean in Mandiac and Arabic. It shows that 99% of the participants were poor in reading, writing, listening and speaking in the Mandaic language. It also shows while 95% of the respondents were excellent in reading Arabic language, 92% were excellent in writing it; and that 100% were excellent in listening and speaking in the Arabic language.

**Table (2) Language proficiency in Mandaic**

<b>Distribution of the Sample by Language Proficiency</b>					
<b>Language proficiency in Mandaic</b>					
Language Skill	Excellent %	Very Good %	Good %	Poor %	Total 100%
Reading	0	0	1	99	100
Writing	0	0	1	99	100
Listening	0	0	1	99	100
Speaking	0	0	1	99	100
<b>Language proficiency in Arabic</b>					
Language Skill	Excellent %	Very Good %	Good %	Poor %	Total 100%
Reading	95	5	0	0	100
Writing	92	8	0	0	100
Listening	100	0	0	0	100
Speaking	100	0	0	0	100

Table (3) below shows that Mandiac is not used at home among members of the family. It also shows that Arabic is the language used at home. This is an indication of Mandiac language loss. And that 100% of them use the Arabic language with their parents, relatives brothers and sisters. In addition, 56% didn't respond to this question because they may be single or have no children. Information extracted from the table below shows while 62% use Arabic language only with their spouses, 88% use Arabic only with their grandparents.

**Table 3:Language Use at Home**

Questions	Mandaic only %	Mandaic & Arabic %	Arabi c only %	NR* %	Total 100%
If you are married, what language(s) do you use when you interact with your children?	0	0	44	56	100
spouse	0	0	62	38	100
parents	0	0	100	-	100
brothers and sisters	0	0	100	-	100
grandparents	0	0	88	12	100
relatives	0	0	100	-	100

It is obvious from the Table (4) below 100% use Arabic in their worship, through watching TV, listening to the radio, in the neighborhood and in the school, university and at work. Table (4) shows that Mandiac is not used outside home. The Table shows that Arabic is used in all other domains such as work, media, neighbourhood, places of worship and education.

**Table 4:Language Use outside the Home**

<b>2-Language use outside the home:</b>	<b>Mandaic only %</b>	<b>Mandaic &amp; Arabic %</b>	<b>Arabic only %</b>	<b>NR* %</b>	<b>Total 100%</b>
<b>What language(s) do you use at the workplace?</b>	0	0	95	5	100
<b>What language(s) do you use at the place of worship?</b>	0	0	100	-	100
<b>What language(s) do you use when you watch TV?</b>	0	0	100	-	100
<b>What language(s) do you use when you listen to the radio?</b>	0	0	100	-	100
<b>What language(s) do you use in the neighborhood?</b>	0	0	100	-	100
<b>What language(s) do you use in the school or university?</b>	0	0	100	-	100

## 4.2 Results of Question Two

The second question of this study is "*What are the factors that have either led them to preserve their cultural features or losing their language?*"

To answer this question, attention is focused on the cultural elements which they have preserved. Table (5) below indicates that 100% of them claimed they have preserved their religious rituals and their social celebration i.e. marriage. And that 99% preserved their habits, customs and traditions. It also shows that 86% of the respondents preserved the family relations while 78% preserved music and songs. Meanwhile, 37% preserved their profession and 31% lost their profession. Finally, while 95% preserved food (ethnic or national), their habits, customs and traditions, 92% preserved their ethnic costumes.

**Table (5):Preserved Mandaean cultural Elements**

Which of the following Mandaean cultural elements have you preserved or lost?	Preserved %	Lost %	relatively preserved %	relatively lost %
Clothes (religious or social)	92	-	5	3
Food (ethnic or national)	95	-	5	-
Habits, customs, and traditions	99	-	1	-
Religious rituals	100	-	-	-
Family relations	86	1	7	6
Music and songs	78	5	14	3
Social celebrations i.e. marriage	100	-	-	-
Festivals (ethnic or national)	81	-	12	7
Professions	37	31	18	14

Table (6) below reports the factors that have caused the loss of their language. 100% of the respondents believe that “*lack of interest in the Mandaean language*” and “*Lack of TV channels that broadcast in Mandaean*” are factors that cause Mandiac language loss. What is more is that a great percentage reached 99% believe that “*Lack of schools that offer classes in Mandaean*” led to the loss of the Mandaean language, 96% believe that “*assimilation in the society*” supported the loss of the Mandaean language. It also shows that 82% of respondents agree that both “*Family*” and “*weak relations among the Mandaeans*” have a great role in losing the Mandaean language. Furthermore, 88% believe that “*Mandaeans’ occupation do not need Mandaean language*” causes the loss the Mandaean language. Besides, 73% of the respondents agree that “*Lack of Mandaean residential areas*” were effective in losing the Mandaean language, and 65% reported that Mandaean didn't advance them socially and economically. However, 33% disagree that “*Mandaean is an ancient language that is not suitable for modern times*” led to the loss of the Mandaean language, 6% agree that it led to this loss.

**Table (6):Factors that cause language loss**

<b>Which of the following factors have caused the loss of your language?</b>	<b>strongly agree %</b>	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>neutral %</b>	<b>Disagree %</b>	<b>strongly disagree %</b>
Family	12	82	2	4	0
Assimilation in the society	96	4	0	0	0
Lack of schools that offer classes in Mandaean	99	1	0	0	0
Mandaeans' occupation do not need Mandaean language	88	12	0	0	0
Lack of TV channels that broadcast in Mandaean	100	0	0	0	0
Weak relations among the Mandaeans	0	0	5	82	18
Lack of interest in the Mandaean language	100	0	0	0	0
Lack of Mandaean residential areas	73	23	4	0	0
Mandaean doesn't advance me socially and economically	65	33	2	0	0
Mandaean is an ancient language that is not suitable for modern times	6	13	23	33	25

### **4.3 Analysis of the Interviews**

This section presents answers to the four questions that dealt with the language and cultural situation among the Sabian Mandaeans community in Baghdad from the view of the interviewed individuals.

Mr. Osama, 40 years old, is a teacher of Mandaic language. He stated that “there are efforts made to preserve the language by establishing a private school to teach Mandaic language in the Mandi temple for the new Mandaean generation.”

Furthermore, he explained that “Arabic dominates the Mandaean community because there is no private Mandaean school and the Mandaean clerics are unable to teach the language for Mandaeans because they are busy in religious matters. Also, they don't practise their language because they live in an Arab community speaking Arabic in their work, their schools, and their universities. So, these reasons have lead them to speak Arabic everywhere and reduced using the Mandiac language.”

Dr. Rafah who is 44 years old indicated that she got married according to the Mandaean traditions. She wore the white clothing the Mandaeans wear in their ceremonies which took place by the Tigris River. She preserved her Mandaean religious culture and tried hard to keep it and teach it to her children to preserve this culture because it is the only thing that distinguishes Mandaeans from other communities. She stated that she could not speak the Mandaic language neither at home nor outside because of the absence of the family role in teaching the language and because there are no schools for Mandaeans.

Dhikra who is 50 years old reported that she kept cooking food for special Mandaean ceremonies such as grilling fish and cooking rice and palm dates. She kept attending Al-Sharea House and practised her baptism though it was hard to attend it because it's very far from her house and the lack of security in Baghdad due to the political conditions. She added that

she had never spoken the Mandaic language. She spoke only Arabic with her children, family members, and friends because Arabic is the dominant language in the Iraqi society. She did not need to speak Mandaic at her workplace and there were no special schools for the Mandaeans nor any special TV broadcasting for them to learn the language.

Urduwan who is 22 years old suggested that he preserved his religious rituals such fasting, baptism and sharing Mandaean celebrations. He kept eating fish and slaughtered meat according to Mandaean religious tradition. About the language, he stated " I do not use it and do not see my family use it in front of me even if I go to Mandi (a worship place) because people there use Arabic only.

Sheikh Anmar, a clergyman, said that he preserved his religious practices because he is a Mandaean clergyman. He kept practicing the three-time prayers in day and also kept fasting and baptizing at the river three times according to Mandaean rituals. He also baptized Mandaeans and met them in marriage and kept eating slaughtered meat which he slaughtered it by himself. About the language, he used the Mandaic language only in religious practices such as prayers, baptism, and in conducting marriage ceremonies because he cherished it. He said it was beautiful and distinguished language, and it is the origin of other languages. He attributed the Mandaic language loss to the negligence of the Iraqi

government regarding the Mandaean affairs. The Iraqi government did not establish special schools for Mandaeans, broadcasting media in Mandaic language or even special social clubs for Mandaeans. He said that Mandaic language is lost because of the flow of Mandaean migrants outside of the country due to the difficult security situations and the continued threats against Mandaeans.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary and short discussion of the results of the two questions. It also tries to provide an explanation and interpretation of the results in the light of the reviewed literature and also offers recommendations for future research.

#### **5.1 Discussion of the Results Related to Question One**

Results in Table (2) showed that the majority number of the Sabian Mandaeans lacked proficiency in the Mandaean language such as speaking, reading or writing. Results related to the domains of language use proved that the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad used Arabic in almost all domains. This result confirmed that the Sabians Mandaeans of Baghdad shifted to Arabic and lost Mandaean language.

Findings reported in Table (3) and (4) showed that Arabic is the language used by the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad. Many of them use Arabic at home with parents, siblings, children, and family members. A great number of them mentioned that they cannot speak the Mandaean language at home which means that the language is lost. It is clear that the language is not passed from one generation to another. The most significant way to learn a language is by parents. The findings reported that a high

percentage of the respond's parents do not speak the Mandaean language. Thus, they did not teach it to their children.

Besides, the findings shown in Table (4) indicated that Arabic is used in all domains such as education, work, worship, neighborhood, and media. This finding agrees with Dashti (2004) whose study shows that Kuwaiti Ajams shifted from Farsi to Arabic. It also agrees with Ortman and Stevens (2008) who reported that there was a shift in Spanish in the American context after the first generation. Furthermore, this also agrees with Dweik &Al-Refa'i (2013) who showed that the Assyrians of Jordan have witnessed language shift from Syriac to Arabic. The findings also agrees with Fishman (1989) who stated that ethnic languages survive through the first three generations at most and tends to be lost by generations who come after.

## **5.2 Discussion of the Results of Question Two**

Results show that that the Sabian Mandaeans preserved some cultural aspects. They celebrate each year their religious rituals. Table (5) reveals that cultural elements such as habits, professions, food, social celebrations and family relations are preserved by the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad. The findings of the questionnaire indicate that a high percentage of the participants know very well about the Mandaean culture. This finding agrees with the results of Alzoubi (2008) who reported that the

Druze of Jordan preserved their language and culture. Similarly, this finding is in line with Al-Khatib and Al-Ali (2013) who stated that the Gypsies of Jordan had maintained their culture. This result also agrees with Dweik and Omar (2015) whose study revealed that the cultural elements of the Circassians of New Jersey have been preserved among their community in New Jersey for more than 80 years. Furthermore, the result is similar to Chiro and Mintstud (2008) whose study indicated that the Druze in South Australia maintained many cultural values and traditions such as family and marriage values.

The results in Table (6) revealed that all listed factors have led the Sabian Mandaeans to lose their language. They have considered “*lack of interest in the Mandaean language*” as the most significant factor which led to losing the Mandaen language. In addition, the Sabian Mandaeans confirmed that the community in Baghdad requires using and learning Arabic because it is the official language of the country and they do not need the Mandaean language at work or any other domains. They, also confirmed that their parents do not speak the Mandaean language due to lack of concern in the Mandaean language. Actually, they have assimilated in the Baghdad society.

These results agree with Dweik and Al-Refa'I (2015) whose study revealed that the Assyrians of Jordan lost their ethnic language "Syriac"

and shifted to the majority language because they preferred to assimilate themselves to seek security in the new society as a result of what they have gone through in their original regions. These results are similar to Dashti (2004) who uncovered that the Kuwaiti Ajams shifted from Farsi to Arabic because of different elements such as intermarriages.

The researcher's own personal communication with some members of the Mandaicans indicate that Mandaean is lost the Baghdad community. The elements that helped in losing the Mandaean language in Baghdad are: the few number of its speakers; the assimilation in the Baghdad society; lack of concern in the Mandaean language; and lack of institutions such as TV channels, social clubs that usually have some effect on keeping the ethnic language alive.

### **.3 Conclusion**

After investigating linguistic and cultural statuses among the Sabian Mandaicans of Baghdad, it is clear that Sabian Mandaicans of Baghdad lack proficiency in their ethnic language (Mandaean). It is used only by the clergymen during the religious rituals. In addition, the Sabian Mandaicans of Baghdad are proficient in Arabic and they use it in all domains. However, they have preserved cultural elements such as religious rituals, social celebrations i.e. marriage, festivals (ethnic or national) and professions.

After investigating the factors that have led the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad to lose their language, it is evident that these factors include the following: lack of concern in the Mandaean language; their assimilation in the society; the negative role of family and home; lack of TV channels that broadcast in the Mandaean language; and that occupations do not need the Mandaean language.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

The researcher recommends conducting more studies on other Sabians Mandaeans minorities in southren Iraq, particularly (Maysan) governorate. In addition, it is reomneded to do more studies to language situations on other ethnic minorities that live in Baghdad such as Armenians and Kurds.

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## Appendix (A)

### **Community Profile Pilot Questionnaire**

Dear participants

I am Ma' alim Alobaidy, a student at the Middle East University. My study is about "*The Linguistic and Cultural Situation among Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad*". The following are open-ended questions that aim at having a comprehensive idea about the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad. I would like to express my gratitude to the Mandaeans of Baghdad for participating in this questionnaire.

#### **Demographic Data**

<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<b>Age</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-39
	<input type="checkbox"/> 40- 49	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 and above	
<b>Marital Status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> widow
<b>Occupation</b>			

1. Please describe the Mandaean's formal wedding for men and women.

.....

.....

2. What makes you a Mandaean?

.....

.....

3. What are the Mandean celebrations?

.....

.....

4. Mention some particular kinds of Mandaean food?

.....

.....

5. Are there any special temples for Mandaeans?

.....

.....

6. Are there any Mandaean clubs in Baghdad?

.....

.....

7. Are there any Mandaean newspapers in Baghdad?

.....

.....

8. Are there any Mandaean public figures that hold posts in the Iraqi government? Or Mandaean musicians or artists or a poets? IF yes Kindly, name them.

.....

.....

Thank you

## Community Profile Pilot Qestionnaire (Arabic Version)

أنا، الطالبة معالم عبد الكريم العبيدي ، طالبة ماجستير في قسم اللغة الانجليزية وآدابها في جامعة الشرق الأوسط في الأردن. أقوم حاليا بدراسة لغوية اجتماعية بعنوان "الوضع الثقافي واللغوي للصabitة المندائيين في بغداد" وفي ما يلي أسلمة مفتوحة تهدف إلى تكوين فكرة شاملة عن الصabitة المندائيين في بغداد. وأود أن أعرب عن امتناني للصabitة المندائيين في بغداد للمشاركة في هذا الإستبيان.

**المعلومات الديموغرافية للمشاركين:**

**الجنس:** ذكر  أنثى

**العمر:** 50 واكثر  45-40  35-30  29-20

**الحالة الاجتماعية:** متزوج/متزوجة  أعزب

**الوظيفة:**

1) يرجى وصف الزي الرسمي لحفلات الزواج لكل من المرأة المندائية والرجل المندائي.

---

2 ) ماهي الأشياء التي تميزك عن سواك كمندائي؟

---

3) ما هي المناسبات التي يحتفل بها المندائيون ؟ بين ذلك

---

4 ) اذكر بعضاً من المأكولات المندائية التي تطهونها؟

---

5 ) ما هي المراكز الدينية أو المعابد المندائية ؟ اذكرها

---

6) هل هناك نوادي ثقافية أو رياضية مندائية يرتادونها في بغداد؟ اذكرها

---

7) هل هناك صحف مكتوبة باللغة المندائية في بغداد؟

---

8) هل هناك شخصيات مشهورة وسط المندائيين من الذين يتقلدون مواقع سلطة في الدولة (مثل أعضاء في البرلمان والمجالس البلدية شعراء وفنانين ....الخ)؟ اذكرهم

---

شكراً لتعاونكم

## Appendix (B)

### A Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

Dear participants,

I, Maalim Alobaidy, an M.A student enrolled in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Middle East University, Amman, Jordan conducting my M.A thesis titled "*The Linguistic and Cultural Situation among Sabian Mandaeans in Baghdad*". I am using a sociolinguistic questionnaire to collect data about my topic. The questionnaire consists of four sections: the first section seeks to get "demographic information" about the participants; the second one tries to find out how proficient are Mandaeans their languages (Mandaeans and Arabic); the third one identifies the Mandaeans' cultural aspects whether preserved or lost; the fourth section investigates the factors that might have led them to lose the Mandaean language or to preserve their culture.

You are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire. Please, feel free to contact the researcher via email [Maalim\\_alobaidy@yahoo.com](mailto:Maalim_alobaidy@yahoo.com) for any further information. Thank you again for taking the time to answer the questionnaire.

***The Researcher, Maalim Alobaidy***

## Section 1: Demographic Data

Please tick the suitable answer

<b>Gender</b>	male <input type="checkbox"/>	female <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Age</b>	14-19 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 – 29 <input type="checkbox"/>	30-39 <input type="checkbox"/>	40-49 <input type="checkbox"/>	above 50 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Marital status</b>	single <input type="checkbox"/>	married <input type="checkbox"/>	other <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Place of birth</b>					
<b>Occupation</b>					
<b>Education</b>					

## Section 2: Language proficiency in Mandaean and Arabic

1- Please rate your ability in the Mandaean language.

Skill	excellent	very good	good	poor
<b>Reading</b>				
<b>Writing</b>				
<b>Listening</b>				
<b>Speaking</b>				

1- Please rate your ability in the Arabic language.

Skill	excellent	very good	good	poor
<b>Reading</b>				
<b>Writing</b>				
<b>Listening</b>				
<b>Speaking</b>				

Note:

---



---

## Section two: Linguistic interaction at different locations

- At home

Question	Mandaean	Arabic	Mandaean and Arabic
<b>What language(s) do you use at home?</b>			
<b>If you are married, what language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your little children?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your spouse?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your brothers and sisters?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your parents?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your grandparents?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at home when you interact with your relatives?</b>			

- Outside home

Questions	only Mandaean	only Arabic	Arabic and Mandaean
<b>What language(s) do you use at the workplace?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use at the place of worship?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use when you watch TV?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use listen to the radio?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use in the neighborhood?</b>			
<b>What language(s) do you use in the school or university?</b>			

### Section three: Preserved cultural aspects

Which of the following Mandaean cultural elements have you preserved or lost?

cultural elements	preserved	lost	relatively preserved	relatively lost
<b>Clothes (religious or social)</b>				
<b>Food (ethnic or national)</b>				
<b>Habits, customs and traditions</b>				
<b>Religious rituals</b>				
<b>Family relations</b>				
<b>Music and songs</b>				
<b>Social celebrations i.e. marriage</b>				
<b>Festivals (ethnic or national)</b>				
<b>Professions</b>				

Other elements

---



---

### Section four: Factors that cause language loss

Which of the following factors have caused the loss of your language?

Factors	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Family</b>					
<b>Assimilation in the society</b>					
<b>Lack of schools that offer classes in Mandaean</b>					
<b>Mandaicans' occupation do not need Mandaean language</b>					
<b>Lack of TV channels that broadcast in Mandaean</b>					
<b>Weak relations among the Mandaicans</b>					
<b>Lack of interest in the Mandaean language</b>					
<b>Lack of Mandaean residential areas</b>					
<b>Mandaican doesn't advance me socially and economically</b>					
<b>Mandaean is an ancient language that is not suitable for modern times</b>					

Other factors

---



---

**Thank You**

## إسْتِبَانَة لغوية اجتماعية (ب)

### أعزائي المشاركين والمشاركات

أنا، الطالبة معلم عبد الكريم العبيدي ، طالبة ماجستير في قسم اللغة الانجليزية وآدابها في جامعة الشرق الأوسط في الأردن. أقوم حاليا بدراسة لغوية اجتماعية بعنوان "الوضع الثقافي واللغوي للصيحة المندائية في بغداد" كمتطلب للحصول على درجة الماجستير في اللغة الانجليزية وآدابها. واستخدم هذه الإسْتِبَانَة لجمع المعلومات حول هذا الموضوع. تتكون هذه الإسْتِبَانَة من أربعة أقسام : يبحث القسم الأول في المعلومات الديموغرافية (الخلفية الاجتماعية) للمشاركين، ويليه القسم الثاني الذي يهدف إلى التعرف على كفاءة المشاركين اللغوية في كل من اللغة المندائية و اللغة العربية، يليه القسم الثالث الذي يبحث في العناصر الثقافية التي استطاع المندائيون الحفاظ عليها وغيرها من التي لم يتمكنوا من الحفاظ عليها ، وأخيرا يبحث القسم الرابع في العوامل التي قد تكون ساعدت المندائيين إما في الحفاظ على لغتهم وثقافتهم الإثنية أو التخلّي عنها.

أرجو منكم التكرم بالإجابة عن الإسْتِبَانَة الآتية، من فضلك لا تتردد في الاتصال في الباحث عبر البريد الإلكتروني [maalim\\_alobiady@yahoo.com](mailto:maalim_alobiady@yahoo.com) لأية معلومات إضافية، شكرا لكم مرة أخرى لمجهودكم على الإجابة عن الأسئلة.

معلم عبد الكريم العبيدي

طالبة ماجستير في عمان / الأردن

**المعلومات الديموغرافية للمشاركين:**

<input type="checkbox"/> ذكر	<input type="checkbox"/> أنثى	الجنس
<input type="checkbox"/> 19-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 29-20	العمر
<input type="checkbox"/> 49-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 39-30	أكثر من 50
<input type="checkbox"/> مطلق / مطلقة	<input type="checkbox"/> متزوج	الحالة الاجتماعية
	<input type="checkbox"/> أعزب	
		مكان الولادة
		المهنة

**أ - الكفاءة اللغوية في اللغة المندائية واللغة العربية:**

1) رجاءً كيف تقيم مقدراتك اللغوية في اللغة المندائية؟

المهارة	ممتاز	جيد جداً	جيد	ضعيف
القراءة				
الكتابة				
الاستماع				
المحادثة				

2 ) كيف تقيم مقدراتك اللغوية في اللغة العربية؟

المهارة	ممتاز	جيد جداً	جيد	ضعيف
القراءة				
الكتابة				
الاستماع				
المحادثة				

ملاحظات:

**التفاعل اللغوي في موقع مختلفة:**

**(1) داخل المنزل**

الأسئلة	المندانية	العربية	المندانية	المندانية والعرببة
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل؟				
اذا كنت متزوجاً ما هي اللغة التي تستخدمها مع أبنائك؟				
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل عندما تتحدث مع زوجتك أو زوجك؟				
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل عندما تتحدث مع اشقائك؟				
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل عندما تتحدث مع والديك؟				
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل عندما تتحدث مع أجدادك؟				
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل عندما تتحدث مع أقاربك؟				

## 2) خارج المنزل

الأسئلة	المندانية فقط	العربية فقط	المندانية والعرببة
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في مكان عملك؟			
ما اللغة التي تستخدمها في مكان العبادة؟			
بأي لغة تشاهد التلفاز؟			
بأي لغة تستمع إلى المذيع؟			
ما هي اللغة التي تستخدمها في الحي؟			
ما هي اللغة التي تستخدمها في المدرسة أو في الجامعة؟			

ج) العناصر الثقافية التي قمت بالحفظ عليها

1) في اعتقادك، أي من العناصر المندانية التالية حافظ عليها المندانيون؟

المظاهر الثقافية	حفظ جزئيا	حفظ	فقد جزئيا	فقد
الزي الديني والاجتماعي				
المأكولات والمشروبات (الدينية والاجتماعية)				
الطقوس الدينية				
العادات والتقاليد والأعراف				
العلاقات العائلية				
الموسيقى والغناء				
الاحتفالات الاجتماعية مثل الزواج				
الاحتفالات (الدينية والوطنية)				
المهن				

أسباب أخرى:

2) العوامل التي ساعدت في التخلّي عن اللغة المندائية:

أي من العوامل التالية تعتقد أنها ساعدت على التخلّي عن اللغة المندائية؟

العامل	اوافق بشدة	اوافق	محايد	اوافق بشدة	لا اوافق بشدة
العائلة					
الاندماج في المجتمع					
عدم وجود مدارس مندائية تهتم باللغة					
الوظائف لا تحتاج إلى اللغة المندائية					
لا يوجد قنوات تلفزيونية تتحدث اللغة المندائية					
قلة الروابط الاجتماعية بين المندائيين					
قلة الاهتمام باللغة المندائية					
لا يوجد أماكن أو نوادي خاصة للمندائيين					
لم يقدم المندائيون لي شيئاً لا اقتصادياً ولا اجتماعياً					
اللّغة المندائية هي لغة قديمة لا تناسب العصر الحديث					

أسباب أخرى:

انتهى، شكرًا على حسن تفاصيلكم...

## **Appendix (c)**

### **Interviews**

Dear participants, these questions are intended to solicit remark the cultural aspects that are preserved among the Sabian Mandaeans of Baghdad. Please answer the following questions:

1. What are the cultural elements which they have preserved?

---

2. What are the cultural elements that they have lost?

---

3. What are the factors that have led them to preserve the Mandaean culture?

---

4. What are the factors that have led them to lose their language?

---

Researcher: Maalim AlObaidy.

### **Demographic Data**

- **Gender:**  Male  Female
- **Age:**  10-19  20-29  30-39  40-49  50 and above
- **Place of birth:**
- **Material status:**  Single  Married  Widowed  Divorced
- **Occupation:**  Business  Education  Medical field  
 Civil service  student  No occupation  Other

**Thank you**

## أسئلة المقابلة

أعزائي المشاركين، هذه الأسئلة تسلط الضوء على المظاهر الثقافية واللغوية التي حافظ عليها الصابئة المندائيون في بغداد. أرجوا الإجابة عن الأسئلة الآتية:

**(1) برأيك، ما هي العناصر الثقافية التي حافظ عليها المندائيون في حياتهم اليومية؟**

---

**(2) برأيك، ما هي العناصر الثقافية التي لم يستطع المندائيون الحفاظ عليها؟**

---

**(3) برأيك ما هي العوامل التي أدت إلى المحافظة على الثقافة المندائية؟**

---

**(4) برأيك ما هي العوامل التي أدت إلى التخلی عن اللغة المندائية؟**

---

**المعلومات الديموغرافية للمشاركين:**

**الجنس: ذكر  أنثى**

**العمر: 50 واكثر  45-40  35-30  29-20**

**الحالة الاجتماعية: أرمل / أرملة  متزوج / متزوجة  مطلق / مطلقة**

**الوظيفة:**

**الباحثة: معالم العبيدي**

## Appendix (D)

### A Validation Letter

Dear Professor,

I, Maalim Alobaidy, an M.A student enrolled in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Middle East University, Amman, Jordan conducting my M.A thesis titled "***The Linguistic and Cultural Situation among Sabian Mandaeans in Baghdad***".

Based on your experience in the sociolinguistics field, I would like you to determine the suitability of the questions used in this questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of four sections: the first section seeks to get "demographic information" about the participants; the second tries to find out how proficient are the Mandaeans in Mandaean and Arabic; the third one identifies the Mandaeans' cultural aspects whether preserved or lost; the fourth section investigates the factors that might have led them to lose the Mandaean language or to preserve their culture.

Your time, help, effort, and cooperation in commenting on the questionnaire are highly appreciated.

***The Researcher, Maalim Alobaid***

## Appendix (E)

### Panel of Experts

Name	University	Specialization
Prof. Bader Dweik	Al-Ahliyya Amman University	Sociolinguistics
Dr. Ibrahim Abu Shihab	Al-Zaytoona University	Linguistics
Dr. Majed Abdulatif	Middle East University	Linguistics
Dr. Deema Al-Omary	Al-Zaytoona University	Linguistics

## Appendix (F)

### Sabian Mandaeans Darfash (Flag)



## Appendix (G)

### Sabian Mandaeans Baptize at Tigris Bank River

