A minority language: The status of Armenian language in Iran

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Armenian language (what is Armenian language?)

Once it was assumed that Armenian is a branch of Persian.
However, we know today that it is an independent language of Indo-European languages.

18th century changes in Armenian language in Armenia led Iranian Armenians to adopt the changes.
Historical background of Armenians and Armenian language in Iran

Multiple views.
The least: they have been in Iran for more than 400 years.
It is significant because they have saved language for at least for over 400 years.
They had a mass immigration around 400 years.
Their immigration is referred to as a volunteer activity.
Considering the genocide of 1915 in Turkey, we can understand their ancestors’ willingness to immigrate to Iran.
19th and 20th century.
2000 years of good relationship.
Armenian and Persian languages

11000 root words in Armenian. 1411 are common with Persian.

Writing system was developed after 4th century AC.

Denial-Mashtot

1) trying the already existing writing systems for the language, and testing their adaptabilities; 2) considering the phonetic compatibility between a writing system and linguistic sounds in the language; 3) gaining the officials’ support for developing a new writing system, since these are people who have power; and today most of general education is done through ministries of education; 4) educating people in the new writing system and showing the effectiveness of the new system; 5) educating general public in the new writing system; 6) making the new writing system a source of access, through translating major scientific and technical sources into the language using the new writing system; 7) establishing sustainable developmental agencies for the writing system.
Political situation of Armenian language
Constitution of 1906 and 1981)

Article 8: All Iranian citizens are equal in front of the law.
In 1921 they could have 2 members in the parliament.
1980 constitution
Article 18: Official language is Persian.
Official communications should be in Persian. In mass media, literature, press minority languages can be used.
It does not guarantee minority language’s use.
Funding is not everything.
The image is associated with people of help and service.
It is socio-historically and politically welcomed.
Armenian language acquisition

Family
School
Community and religion.

Building of school and church together.
Accepting changes happening in the country of Armenia.
Status of Armenian language in Iran according to Fishman 1991 categorization

1) How distinctive is the status of Armenian language in Iran?
2) What is the place of RLS among social movements?
3) Is learning Armenian among this ethnicity considered as a social or individual activity?
4) Rationality argument has a long history when referring to efforts of learning minority languages. What is the place of such an argument referring to Armenian language learning in Iran?
5) A key element of minority language maintenance is intergenerational link. How intergenerational link is kept among Armenians in Iran?
6) Where does Armenian minority language stand with respect to eight stages of minority language status defined by Fishman?
Final words

Armenian language does not fit Fishman categorization.
There is no sign of its extinction.
Socio-political context matters.
Adopting lessons from maintained minority languages may be more effective than current revival projects.